

OBSERVATIONS

(In behalf of the Methodists)

ON

A PAMPHLET

LATELY PUBLISHED BY

THE REV. R. POLWHELE,

Vicar of Manaccan, Cornwall,

ENTITLED,

"Anecdotes of Methodism."

BY SAMUEL DREW,

St. Austle, Cornwall.

"Of the Articles it may be enough to say in general, that I subscribed them with Burnet in my hands : and Burnet has from that hour been my guide."

Polwhele, Second Letter, p. 23.

"To this question, Do you trust that you are inwardly moved by the Holy Ghost? my answer was, I come with a sincere motive of religion, the Holy Spirit I trust assisting me to take upon me the office, &c."—Polwhele, p. 24.

"If any man says I trust so, that yet knows nothing of any such motion; he lies to the Holy Ghost; and makes his first approach to the altar with a lie in his mouth, and that not to man, but God."—Burnet's Pastoral Care.

"I confess I am unable to develope your meaning; unless you would insinuate, that to declare myself to be inwardly moved by the Holy Ghost, and yet to hold the "sensible" experience of an inward motion ridiculous, is to retract at one time what I had professed at another."—Polwhele, p. 23.

"Thus far, Sir, am I consistent with myself."—Polwhele, p. 25.

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1800.

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CHURCH OF THE HOLY TRINITY

OF THE CITY OF NEW YORK

1850

IN THE CITY OF NEW YORK

IN THE COUNTY OF NEW YORK

IN THE STATE OF NEW YORK

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INTRODUCTION.

THE occasion of this pamphlet is now before the world ; and the person to whom it is addressed merits from me no apology for its appearance. But as there are many persons into whose hands this pamphlet will probably fall, who know little of the present controversy ; a short detail of its nature and circumstances cannot be either uninteresting or useless.

Some time since, the Revd. R. Polwhele, vicar of Manaccan, sent into the world a pamphlet, entitled, " A Letter " to the Revd. R. Hawker, D. D." on what he terms, his " late expedition into Cornwall ;" under a pretence of charging him with irregularity and indecorum : and, by an artifice which seems to be peculiarly his own, he has, through that channel, taken occasion to abuse, in the most illiberal manner, a large body of people (with whom Dr. Hawker has not the least connexion) generally known by the name of Methodists. That this attack on Dr. H. has been the most wanton and unprovoked, no friend to truth or lover of religion can possibly deny. Nor can any sophistical pretence which Mr. P. may adopt, even justify his public conduct towards Dr. H. much less plead in apology for that personal ridicule which he has so wantonly lavished on his private character ; and which can only be calculated to hold him up to the scoffs of the irreligious, and the derision of the prophane. From a professed infidel, such a line of conduct would have been what every reasonable man might have expected ; but how it can be reconciled to the professional character of Mr. Polwhele, who fills not only the sacred office of a civil magistrate, but that of a minister of the gospel, I am at a loss to say. Dr. Hawker's irregularities, however, were soon lost in the irregular conduct of Mr. Polwhele towards him ; and his expedition into Cornwall, was soon buried in the discovery of his being a Calvinist. Animadversions on his public œconomy, soon degenerated into an attack on his private sentiments ; and both, at length, sunk into forgetfulness, under the pressure of personal abuse. It is also observable, that although Mr. P. has been so liberal in his execration of Calvinism, he has not been so liberal in his arguments to prove it wrong ;

nor, in fact, to erect any system of doctrines more consistent with scripture in its stead. But though I thus speak, I am not a Calvinist; nor can I reconcile their doctrines with my judgment and views of things. Dr. Hawker is a man whom I never saw, nor ever had the most distant correspondence with. I am, therefore, not his apologist. And he has sufficiently evinced to the world, that he stands in no need of such assistance as my pen is capable of affording.

The Letter already alluded to, has produced from Dr. Hawker a reply, written in a manner that, at least, bespeaks the Christian and the gentleman. And its contents have been thought by Mr. Polwhele of sufficient weight to call forth from him a "Second Letter:" in which Methodism is thrown by; and the miserable shifts and evasions to which he is obliged to have recourse, demonstrate how unable the writer of it is to bear the touch of Ithuriel's spear.—This has produced a Second Letter from Dr. Hawker; in which he has completely broken Mr. P.'s magic lantern: and, curious as it may appear, it is nevertheless true, that after having held up Dr. Hawker as a "crowd catcher"—as an "enthusiast"—as a "fanatic;" and even hinted that at last he may expire an atheist; Mr. P. has the assurance to tell the world, that Dr. Hawker is too uncharitable to be contended with!—Here the matter rests with them.

In this stage of the business, the Methodists heard, it is true, "the tumult of the distant throng;" but beholding this magic lantern broken to pieces, they too fondly thought that they had nothing more to fear. This conclusion has however proved fallacious. Mr. P. has seized the moment of their hope, and improving by his late disaster, collected his broken fragments; with these, commenced on the Methodists a fresh attack, and exhibited it to the world at large, as follows:

P. 57, "*These facts, whether furnished by the last or present generation, all equally relate to one body of people—the Methodists. Taken altogether, they seem to indicate, that Methodism has not been analysed unjustly; and that, resolved into ignorance with itching ears, prevarication, lying, hypocrisy, knavery, contempt of the regular clergy, an intractable and revengeful spirit, political restlessness, vain glory, uncharitableness, prophaneness, uncleanness, the spirit of family discord, freakishness, distraction and insanity; it has a tendency to betray its votaries into every irregularity, and to plunge them into every vice.*" And (p. 51) "*Such facts are*

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"likely to have more weight, than all the reasoning in the world."—These fragments are now before the world; and have, by the vicar of Manaccan, been lately baptized, "*Anecdotes of Methodism*." And all these parts being arranged in proper order, may be again united, whenever any one shall properly request it, by the happy cement of Mawnan-Smith.—What kind of facts these are, which are likely to have so much weight, those who read this pamphlet will soon discover. It is from an apprehension that these fragments assume their existence on a wrong ground, that I have made enquiries into the authenticity of the supposed facts; and the event is, the appearance of *this* pamphlet in the world. Here terminates the history of this affair at present.

Whether an occasion can possibly exist, that can justify an asperity of language, is a point on which my readers may be divided; but if an occasion be admitted possible, that occasion now presents itself.—It may be asked, why I have not made a more frequent application to scripture? why my language is so severe? with a variety of such questions; to all of which I reply—because I address myself to Mr. Polwhele.

Whatever opinion Mr. P. or any other person, may form of these pages, I hope all will have penetration enough to discern, that recrimination forms no part of its contents; it is a point which I have studiously avoided, and founded this pamphlet on a principle of self-defence.

The clergy, as a body, I respect and venerate; and feel myself attached to many from a principle of gratitude and personal obligation. To commence, therefore, an attack on them, would be as wanton as it would be base; and would be at once to imitate and condemn the conduct of Mr. Polwhele. I am not conscious of having used a single expression which carries with it a shade of disrespect to any man alive, detached from him to whom it is addressed. And sincerely do I hope, that should any expression occur which may strike the reader differently from what it has struck the writer; that it may be attributed to inadvertency; or, in short, to any thing rather than design.

Mr. P. has indeed said, that "*his Letter is but an echo to discourses from all the pulpits around him*;" but I do not give credit this assertion; and shall act accordingly. He has also said, that "*Methodism plunges its votaries into every vice*;" and yet that "*there are amongst them great numbers, whose unaffected piety would stand the test of the severest scrutiny*." Thus making two opposite effects to

flow from the same principle ; which includes this sterling contradiction—that Methodism produces unaffected piety, and does not produce it, at the same time. But it does not follow, that what he says is true. The only rational inference, indeed, that can be drawn from these expressions is, the unaccountable ignorance of the man who wrote them. He also observes, (p. 1) “ *I use Methodism as a general term, including the more serious sort of religionists.*” And (in p. 3) “ *the word is often applied in a still more general sense to persons truly and sincerely religious, in this sense I have never used it.*” Thus *seriousness* is placed in opposition to *sincerity* ; and a religious man is one, who is neither a religionist nor serious ! But passing by this nonsense, it does not follow from hence, either that these things are so, or that any clergyman would attempt to subscribe to this folly ; much less, that his Letter is but an “ echo to discourses from all the pulpits “ around” him.

As the pamphlet in question is very scarce in Cornwall, rendered so, I presume, for reasons best known to its author ; and as but few in this county, comparatively speaking, know any thing about it ; I have taken the liberty of transcribing the anecdotes, almost at large, as they stand in Mr. Polwhele’s book ; that those who have a sight of this pamphlet, may see the anecdotes and their answers together.

It may be asked, are those persons Methodists whose names are inserted as evidences on the facts ? To this I answer, some of them are, and others are not ; I have made no distinction. The age of Titus Oates and William Bedloe is no more. The distinction would carry with it an idea of party, which I ever wish to lose sight of.

I acknowledge myself to be indebted for two or three expressions, to the author of an anonymous pamphlet lately published, entitled “ *Methodism tried, &c.*” And with these observations I commit it to the world.

St. Austle, July 2, 1800.

OBSERVATIONS, &c.

REVEREND SIR,

I N sending the following pages into the world, I have no design either to offend or to flatter ; but to rescue truth from the hands of error. But, lest you should interpret this as an apology for my presumption, I tell you before the world, that I neither court your favour nor dread your frowns. An attachment to the cause of truth, if I can render it any service, enables me to disregard both your censure and applause. Under the influence of this principle, I therefore take the liberty of freely animadverting on the pamphlets which you have lately sent into the world, and which at present engross some part of the public attention.

In perusing your "Second Letter to Dr. Hawker," I observed one point which, I think, cannot fail to strike every attentive reader, namely, that perfect consistency which you attempt to persuade the world you possess ; of which too you appear to be so tenacious ; and on account of which you seem to be so much piqued, because Dr. H. has insinuated something to its disadvantage. Which perfect consistency would never have been discovered by me had you not hinted that it did and does exist.

Whether these scruples of yours have arisen from a secret consciousness of your inconsistency, or from that peculiar complacency with which you seem to view your offspring of the first of June, I take not upon me to say ; but, though ignorant of your person, I have too much respect for your understanding, to conceive that you can be altogether insensible to these defects. But while I attempt to excuse your understanding, perhaps the glaring inconsistencies which I hope to make appear, and which no language can explain away, may fall with redoubled weight on some more vulnerable part. However much I might be justified by your example, in calling upon external facts, which would lead me with precision to the true source from whence these inconsistencies have issued ; I feel myself under no necessity to make the application, as the pamphlets under consideration afford me ample supplies.

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Admitting these inconsistencies to exist (which I hope soon to make appear) I am reduced to the necessity of attributing them to accident, or design. If to the former, you then appear to the world as a gentleman forgetting your station and character, and pursuing the Methodists, through right and wrong, till your sight dimmed with pursuing, has led you onward after the *ignis fatuus* of your own fancy—"o'er bog and steep, o'er strait, rough, dense, or rare," till you have completely lost yourself in the labyrinth of your own invention.

But if I attribute these inconsistencies to *design*, I behold them as the result of a deep-rooted malignity, thrown out as baits to deceive the credulity of the more unwary reader, and which, like the doctrines of your Letter, are calculated to conduct them to their fate. Thus have you pursued your more than Quixotic expedition; but missed in your progress your intended object, while your reputation bleeds at every pore. Be this as it may, your inconsistencies *do* exist, and to these inconsistencies I now repair.

In your first Letter to Dr. H. (p. 90.) you say, "and let *us* all be aware, whatever *our* tenets may be, that *NOTHING* can afford *us* comfort at the hour of death, but the consciousness of having done justice, loved mercy, and walked humbly with our God." On this position, after being pressed by Dr. H. you say, (p. 21. Second Letter, "you must know, that the acts of justice and the love of mercy of which I spoke, were not assumed to myself." Now, how any man, after reading the above quotations, can conceive that the words *us* and *our* did not include and was not assumed to yourself, I confess I do not know. Besides, you either did assume the above quotation to yourself, or you did not. If you did, you contradict p. 21, Second Letter, where you have denied it; if not, you declare yourself destitute of those consolations of a dying hour, which (as you have said) nothing but this consciousness can bestow. In the former case, what credit is due to your assertions? in the latter, what are we to think of you as a minister of the gospel?

But the acts of justice and mercy were not (it seems) "assumed to yourself, but recommended to Christians in general as the consolations of a dying hour." p. 21. Second Letter. Now, admitting this general recommendation of your principles; and that they apply to Christians in general, but are not assumed to yourself; it then follows

from your own principles, that *you* are not a Christian ; because these consolations are recommended to Christians in general, but are not assumed to yourself. But if we admit Mr. Polwhele to be a Christian, though contrary to his own principles ; his "consolations," &c. must arise from his "acts of justice," &c. or from something else. If from the former, he assumes it to himself. But this contradicts p. 21, Second Letter, as quoted above. If the latter (namely, that his consolations arise from something else) this will contradict p. 90, First Letter, where he says "*nothing* can afford us comfort, but the consciousness of doing justice," &c. What credit can be due to the man who can thus so glaringly contradict himself !

To mend this matter, you have recourse to another expedient ; and, in a note (p. 21, Second Letter) you say ; "I have no where represented our good works as affording us any ground of confidence towards God, but through the merits of our Saviour Jesus Christ."

You here completely make the ground of confidence to be no source of consolation ; for you have said above, that "*nothing can afford consolation*, &c. but the consciousness of having done justice," &c. Now, admitting the truth of this position, *that nothing can afford*, &c. the merits of Christ, however much they may be the ground of confidence towards God, must be necessarily excluded from affording the Christian any consolation in a dying hour ; and how any thing can be the ground of my confidence, which can afford me no consolation, is, I confess, as mysterious, as to suppose any thing to *be*, and *not* to be, at the same time.

Besides your assertion in the above note is not reconcilable with p. 90, in point of fact. For in p. 90, you have made the consolation of a dying hour to depend entirely upon human attainments ; consequently, you have excluded the merits of Jesus Christ. You have not so much as hinted within many pages, that ever there had been a Saviour in the world ; and yet you tell us now, you have no where represented our good works as affording us any ground for confidence but through the merits of our Saviour Jesus Christ ! How any man can expect to obtain the confidence of his readers, while his pamphlets bear testimony before the world to these inconsistencies I know not ; it is such a deplorable instance of something which I will not name, as I never expected to have met with in all my life.

As a proof of what I have advanced, you accuse Dr. H.

(p. 50.) with excluding human qualifications from having any share in our acceptance with heaven. Your words are, "it seems then, that those who are either expecting, or have received, an assurance of salvation, are not at all better qualified for acceptance with heaven on the score of morality." To this charge Dr. H. has pleaded guilty. Now if it be false doctrine in him, to exclude human merit from having any share in our acceptance, you must be a preacher of this same false doctrine, or you must dissent from him in opinion on this very point. If the former, what are we to think of the sincerity of your accusation? If the latter, and man be admitted to be better qualified for acceptance on the score of morality, you flatly contradict your own assertion (p. 21, Second Letter) where you say, "I have no where represented our good works as affording us any ground for confidence;" and then you gravely add, "thus far I am consistent with myself!" Thus are we lost in this labyrinth of literary confusion; and buffeted to and fro in the nicely-poized scales of contradiction.

Form your consistency I will turn for a short season to take a view of your *motive*, both before the bishop, and in writing to Dr. H. On this head you tell us (p. 24, Second Letter) "with this solemn declaration before the bishop I hasten to compare my letter to Dr. H. and instantly my heart determines that there is a perfect correspondence between both; since my sole view in addressing you, was to promote the glory of God, and the edification of his people." Admitting your motive to be, as you say, solely to promote the glory of God, permit me to take a view of the manner in which you have been rendering it service.

You have charged thousands whom you never saw, and whom 'tis probable you never will, till you meet them at the bar of God, with being levellers, rogues, debauchees, fornicators, adulterers, robbers, seducers, false prophets, and ripe for rebellion; and all this solely to promote the glory of God! You have charged Dr. H. with being both an enthusiast and fanatic; you have held him up to the scoffs and ridicule of the irreligious and prophane; and, with him, you have borne down before you whole latitudes of people, in which neither age nor youth, sect nor party, have been spared; and all this has been done (strange as it may appear) "solely to promote the glory of God!"—But this is not all; it is also for "the edification of the people of God." But whether this is to be done by precept, or example, we are not

told. If by precept, it must be by avoiding all religious duties on week days and uncanonical hours. For "when seasonable hours are appointed for holy offices, to fly to unseasonable, is factious." This is edifying the people of God by precept. I will now consider it to be by example. It must then be by following your conduct, and imitating your actions. Those, therefore, who are thus to be edified, must abuse their neighbours, and charge them with crimes which they cannot prove; must avoid the worship of God on Sunday evenings, and on all week days; be inconsistent with Burnet, with themselves, and with the word of God; must ridicule what they once professed to believe, and invert the order of the gospel. When this, and more than this, is done, the people of God will be edified by your example! But the "general sentiment of your letter (it seems) is but an echo to discourses from all the pulpits around you." What the clergy of Cornwall will say to this I know not; but sincerely hope, and firmly believe, that the position is not true. For if all the pulpits around you utter notes of which your letter is but an echo; then all the pulpits around you must be so many vehicles of inconsistencies, absurdities, contradictions and abuse; and the motive from whence they thus act, must be "solely to promote the glory of God and the edification of his people;" or your letter cannot be an echo to their discourses. If this declaration of yours be true, what are we to think of the clergy you thus describe? if false, what are we to think of the gentleman who has made it? If the former, is not secession justifiable on principles of common sense? if the latter, what credit is due to the man who deals in such unwarrantable traffic? "Many men have done nobly, but thou excellest them all!"

But "our diocesan (it appears) appreciates in just terms the exertions of his clergy, in whatever shape they come forward" (p. 25, Second Letter). If this assertion be true, it follows, that this groupe of contradictions, this chain of inconsistencies, this shapeless mass of absurdities, which you have sent into the world must be approved of by him, and a fine compliment you will then have paid to his Lordship's character! but if the position be false, what a trophy more is added to your own!

In page 22, First Letter, you say, "If the Holy Spirit exert itself only in purifying those who are polluted by sin, what have we to do, but to gather about us the filthiness

“ of the flesh as fast as we can, in order to render ourselves
 “ fit objects of grace? Let us sin, that grace may abound.”
 —This strange passage presents itself in such an unshapely
 form to my mind, that I know not which most excites my
 surprize, its assumptive or its conclusive part. I will first
 look at its assumptive part. Does Mr. P. mean to insinuate,
 that the Holy Spirit can exert itself in the purification of what
 is not polluted? If so, I will seriously ask, what else is ca-
 pable of purification?—The very idea of purification, implies
 impurity in the object; and the shades which divide impu-
 rity from pollution are, I confess, too minute for my dis-
 cernment. Besides, to admit this position, is to suppose,
 that some are to be found who are not polluted, and conse-
 quently who want not purification; and where even the
 exertions themselves, supposing them to take place, must be
 necessarily useless. It also flatly contradicts that plain
 scripture which declares that all have sinned, and come short
 of the glory of God. But it is so diametrically opposite to
 the whole tenor of the gospel, that to pursue the thought
 further, would be insulting to common sense. Let us now
 look at the conclusive part, viz. “ what have we to do, but
 “ to gather, &c. Let us sin, that grace may abound.” Such
 are the conclusions which you have drawn from the above
 premises. You have been, however, rather unfortunate in
 your adoption; for they are the very words which the
 apostle had put into the mouth of an enemy to the gospel.
 And if the doctrines which you here call into question, were
 not agreeable to the gospel, how could the apostle have an-
 ticipated those very objections which you have here made?
 See Romans vi. 3. where he exclaims against such conclu-
 sions, “ God forbid.”—This question it is incumbent on
 you to answer; and you have now a fair opportunity of
 doing it before the world. What! because God is merciful,
 we must do evil, that good may come! May eternal silence
 cover such sentiments; and may their author learn more re-
 verence for that gospel of which he is a minister!

You go on to say, (p. 45, 46. First Letter) “ then, it
 “ seems, that all mankind come under two grand divisions;
 “ first, those who, left to themselves, are insensible of their
 “ sins; and, secondly, those who, awakened to a sense of
 “ their sins, are either expecting, or have received, an as-
 “ surance of salvation.” From the surprize which you seem
 to express at this doctrine (that all mankind come under
 two grand divisions) I must believe that your sentiments

are very different, and then it follows, that the divisions of mankind must be either more or less. If *more*, you must find a race of human beings, which has hitherto been thought to have had no existence in nature ; men who are neither in their sins, nor delivered from them ; neither awakened to a sense of their sins, nor have received, an assurance of salvation : men who are neither innocent nor guilty ; neither sinners nor saints. Or, in plain terms, you will have discovered a race of beings without any denomination, without which their existence cannot be ascertained ; which involves this plain contradiction, that they do exist, and do not exist, at the same time. If the divisions of mankind be less than what you have condemned, you must make them to be all sinners, or all saints. If all sinners, then it follows, that the Holy Spirit can exert itself only in the purification of what is polluted, and this will then contradict p. 22 ; but if all be saints, then there can be none of those who, of no " religion " at all, go to the evening meeting for the purpose of pursuing " their licentious amours ; " nor can " methodism plunge its " votaries into every vice." Thus are you completely barred up on each side, and are under the necessity of flatly contradicting your own assertions, or of adopting that very proposition which you here call into question.

After having (in p. 24. Second Letter) given some account of your ordination, you proceed :—" with that solemn " declaration before the bishop, I hasten to compare my " Letter to Dr. H. and instantly my heart determines that " there is a perfect correspondence between both."—From this passage, the sincerity of your declaration before the bishop may be known with precision ; while your Letter to Dr. H. may be considered as a comment on the whole ; because *there is a perfect correspondence between both*. Now, admitting this perfect correspondence between your declaration and your Letter, and considering the latter as a comment on the former ; whatever charges may attach to your consistency, to the purity of your motive, or to the manner in which you promote the glory of God, in your Letter, they all fall with equal weight on your declaration before the bishop ; because *your heart determines that there is a perfect correspondence between both*. And whatever hypocrisy, indecency, falsehood, equivocation, or duplicity, I can discover in your Letter, you can attach the whole to your declaration before the bishop ; because *there is a perfect correspondence between both*.

In p. 23, Second Letter, after being pressed by Dr. H. on your prevarication before the bishop; you shuffle off the charge by saying, "I am unable to develope your meaning; unless you would insinuate, that to declare myself to be inwardly moved by the Holy Ghost, and yet to hold the *sensible experience* of an inward motion ridiculous, is to retract at one time, what I had professed at another." It is evident from hence, that you admit your own inconsistency, if it can be proved, that to be inwardly moved, is the same as to hold the sensible experience of the Holy Ghost; because you admit the former, but ridicule the latter. The proof of this I undertake.

Now if, when before the bishop, you declared you were moved, you must have been sensible of that motion, or you must not; if not, "you approached the altar (as Burnet observes) with a lie in you mouth; and that, not unto man, but God:" and this will prove your hypocrisy, with a vengeance. But if you *had* such motion, you must have known it; which knowledge, or sensibility, was to you the only possible proof that any such motion existed. And to admit, as you here do, the existence of the motion, while you disclaim all sensibility of its existence; is to admit, that you *know* a thing, *without being sensible* of it; and that you know you have a motion, without knowing any thing at all about it!—the palpable contradictoriness of which I need not point out to the reader; while you, Sir, are under the necessity of admitting your own inconsistency, or of subscribing once more to a flat contradiction.

You also say, (p. 31, First Letter) after speaking of Westley, "who knows but his followers may receive, in some evil hour, a jacobinical bias?" and in p. 83, that they are "all ripe for rebellion." Thus you positively assert in p. 83, what you doubt the existence of in p. 31; for in 31, you found your apprehensions of danger on the uncertainty of what "may" be; and fairly admit that no such bias has yet taken place. But in 83, the bias seems to be arrived at maturity; and that very people who, in 31, had no such bias, are in 83, "all ripe for rebellion." Thus are you doubting the truth of your own positive assertions, and suspecting the varacity of your own words; while you are calling upon the world for that credit to your sentiments which you hesitate to give yourself! Who, then, can believe a man, who questions his own varacity, and who doubts the truth of his own sentiments in the very moment he is obtruding them upon the world?

In p. 36, you ask Dr. H. to work a miracle, as a proof of his mission into Cornwall. You then add, "unless you do this, we will not believe you." If a miracle be necessary to prove a mission to preach the gospel in Cornwall, or else where, under the direction of the Holy Spirit, it is as incumbent on you to work a miracle as it is on him: and your not having wrought one, is a plain proof that a miracle is not necessary to prove a mission, or that you have not been directed into Cornwall to preach by the Holy Spirit. If the former, "out of thine own mouth thou art judged;" if the latter, the apostle shall do that office; for we read (Romans viii. 9) "if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his."

You say (p. 12, First Letter) "faith, and being born of God, (says Westley) are an instantaneous work." I answer, so does the Bible; and so does common sense. Hence we read, "without faith, it is impossible to please God." And again, "being justified by faith, we have peace with God," &c. Now as there can be no medium between belief and no belief, so there can be no medium between justification and no justification. To suppose the contrary, is to suppose a period, in which a man may be partly justified, but not wholly. This being the case, I ask, suppose a man, in your half-justified earthly purgatory, should die; would his spirit enter into the abodes of happiness or woe? If to happiness, it follows, that justification is not essential to salvation; if to woe, as justification is supposed to be begun, and which cannot be without faith, he must go thither with justifying faith. But this is contrary to the express declarations of the word of God; for he that believeth, &c. shall be saved. As such persons are thus necessarily disqualified for either state, you will be obliged to dismiss them from a Manaccan purgatory to a popish limbo; and, in the literary resurrection which you have given to Bishop Lavington, you may request him to write another treatise on the purgatory of the papists and Mr. Polwhele compared.

You have also observed, (p. 53) "Were it necessary, I could mention a cobbler at no great distance, whose wife was seduced by a young methodist preacher both from his bed and board." To sift this story, enquiries have been made in *eleven* distinct parishes in the neighbourhood of Manaccan; and the truth is, that no such man, nor women, nor preacher is to be found; nor are any such circumstances known as you have represented. It is in your pages that

the story exists, and there alone ; in every other place it has vanished, " like the baseless fabric of a vision, and left not " a wreck behind." Whether, in colouring this artful tale, you are most to be suspected of doing " lying wonders," or of telling wondrous lies, I take not upon me to determine ; it seems to be of mongrel breed, a compound of both.

In p. 47, you say, " The heathens, not having the law, " are a law unto themselves ; and if they act in conformity " to that law, they will assuredly be saved, through Christ, " who died for the sins of the whole world. If Dr. H. " allows the truth of this position, and yet exclude *moral* " Christians* from salvation, it is truly an unfortunate thing " that they were born in a Christian country, or admitted " within the pale of the church." The assumptive part of this argument, as applying to heathens, I admit ; but the inference, as applying to moral Christians. I deny. For if moral Christians can be saved by the law of heathens, how can the heathens be a law unto *themselves* ? and if they cannot, what is become of your inference ? In the former case, you deny scripture ; which declares, that they are a law unto themselves : and in the latter, you contradict yourself. But I am not surprized at either, as Mr. Polwhele is thus far *consistent with himself*!"

In p. 50, you charge Dr. H. with inculcating this doctrine : " that those who are expecting, or have received, " an assurance of salvation, are not at all better qualified for " acceptance with heaven on the score of morality." As this doctrine is thus called in question by you, it most certainly meets with your decided disapprobation ; conse-

* What Mr. P. means by " moral" Christians, as distinguished from others, I am at a loss to know. I had hitherto thought, that morality was always included in the very idea of Christianity ; and that Christianity could not exist abstracted from it : but, it seems, there may be Christians without morality ! I presume they live under the same meridian with those, who are neither in their sins, nor delivered from them ; who are neither awakened to a sense of their sins, nor insensible of them ; who are neither expecting, nor have actually received, an assurance of salvation.

In the Quixotic region which these unaccountables inhabit, I know not a more proper person to be their minister than Mr. Polwhele. He has declared, that he has been moved to take upon him the holy office, and yet disclaims the only evidence by which that motion could be known ; that the heathens are a law unto " themselves," and yet moral Christians may be saved thereby ; while the whole tenor of his Letters exhibits the most pointed instances of inconsistency and absurdity, and become a powerful rival with the Bible, in reproaching his reputation with the most glaring contradictions. With all these qualifications, this modern Romulus, the founder and parent of this imaginary empire, has the most unequivocal claim to become their guide, to instruct them how they may be moved without being sensible of it ; and to teach them how to obtain a moral perfection by the law of heathens, while the heathens are a law unto themselves. It is thus a race of non-descripts, inhabiting a non-entity, will become the true disciples of a literary Janus !

quently, you believe that men *are* better qualified for acceptance on the score of morality.

As you are here fairly at issue, the primary question is, which is most agreeable to scripture, the church of England, and common sense? As to scripture, we read, *By the deeds of the law shall no flesh be justified in his sight. By grace are ye saved, through faith; not of works, lest any man should boast; not by works of righteousness which we have done. If righteousness came by the law, then Christ is dead in vain; If it be by grace, it is no more of works; otherwise grace is no more grace.* These, with many other passages, will place scripture in a decisive point of view. As to the Articles, we read, Art. 11, "Man is accounted righteous before God only for the merits of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, by faith, without his own works or deservings." Also, Art. 13, "All works done before the grace of Christ, and the inspiration of his Holy Spirit, are not pleasant to God." Here also is a perfect harmony, and to these truths common sense too will add her signature.

Every moral action must derive its excellency from the relation it bears to some law; and this rule or law, whatever it may be, must be the criterion of its turpitude or its merit. In your Second Letter, p. 30, you not only admit that "our best deeds are largely tinged with infirmity," but you "most heartily assent to this position." Now, how those very actions which are thus largely tinged with infirmity can qualify us for acceptance with heaven, and that in the eye of that very law which at once discovers and denominates the infirmity, is, I confess, such a mode of reasoning as can be rendered only *consistent with yourself*. To admit this, is to make the law approve and disapprove of the same object, at the same time; to mark as an infirmity, what it allows to be a qualification; and to admit as a claim for acceptance, that very infirmity which renders it objectionable.

Thus, Sir, from this three-fold evidence—scripture, the Articles, and common sense, the point is, I hope, satisfactorily established in favour of that sentiment which you have called into question; and, if so, "you stand a convict at truth's awful bar."

But there is still a consequence more fatal to your reputation, whether you agree with, or dissent from, Dr. H. on this point. If you agree with him, you are the subject of your own reproach; and that very contempt which you

had designed for him, returns upon your own head, with all its acrimony ; but if you dissent from him, that dissension must have been at the time you were admitted into holy orders, and signed the Articles, or since (for it has been already proved that there is a perfect agreement between the Bible, the Articles, common sense, and the position in question) ; if at the time of your signing, you avow your hypocrisy before the world ; if since, you prove at one stroke your own apostacy. It is incumbent on you, either to admit these conclusions, or to repel them. In doing the former, you give up the point ; and in doing the latter, you will reconcile contradictions. By giving up the point, you will prove the perfect consistency between your Letter and your declaration before the bishop ; and by reconciling contradictions, you will satisfactorily prove, that *thus far you are consistent with yourself!*

In a note at p. 81, you say, “ I have met with several “ cheats among the Methodists ; one of whom plainly intimated, on the detection of a fraud, that his being regular “ at church and sacrament, would make up for a little lack “ of common honesty !” It is evident on the face of this quotation, that the man had not wholly forsaken the church ; because church and sacrament were the atonement he meant to offer for his default. The man (if ever there were such person) seems to be a complete convert to your doctrine, p. 39, which “ doubts whether any man can be a lost sinner, “ who every Lord’s day attends the service of the church.” And the rules of analogical reasoning will certainly allow, that if the mere going to church will prevent him from being a lost sinner, the addition of sacrament will certainly make up for “ a little lack of common honesty ;” and he that is a convert to p. 39, will not be very hostile to p. 81.

In addition to this, you say, (p. 83) “ all are equally “ alienated from the church government.” Now if we admit p. 83 to be true, what are we to think of p. 81, which declares “ the knowledge of a methodist who not only attended the church, but expected that his receiving the sacrament would make up for the lack of a little honesty ?” P. 81 must now be false. But if we admit 81 to be true, then all cannot be equally alienated from the church government ; consequently, 83 is false. It is thus you contradict yourself ; and prove the perfect correspondence between your Letter to Dr. H. and your declaration before the bishop ; replete with expressions which falsify one another !

With respect to the qualifications which all should possess who are about to be admitted into holy orders, you say, (p. 22, Second Letter) "the legislature of the 13th of Elizabeth is the imposer; whose intention is to exclude, first, abettors of popery; secondly, anabaptists; thirdly, puritans. These three denominations, therefore, ought not to sign; but all others may." On this, one very obvious question will arise, which is this: suppose, when about to be admitted into holy orders, you had declared to Bishop Ross that you were an infidel; would he have permitted you to sign? if he would, what are we to think of his Lordship? if not, what are we to think of yourself? If the above assertions be true, you make him a favourer of infidelity; but if false, the world will excuse me from giving you a name to which you have so clearly proved your title.

You say (p. 83) when enumerating the fancied catalogue of methodistical enormities, that they are "all ripe for rebellion." If this charge be false, your assertion needs no comment. But if it be supposed true, you must have a sufficiency of evidence on which you found your charge, or you must not. If not, you fall again; but if you have, you are able to reveal that evidence; and by so doing, you will bring to condign punishment a large body of people "all ripe for rebellion," and be delivered from "the yoke of methodism, which is too heavy to be borne." By not having done so, you prove yourself an abettor of their conspiracies; and consequently (if you can prove the truth of your assertions) a traitor to your king and country. Thus then, like Haman, intoxicated with presumption, your name must stand gibbeted on that literary gallows which, like him, you had erected for another purpose.

In p. 85, you observe, "It is not learning, but singularity; not truth, but mysticism; not reason, but passion, that affects the uncultivated mind." Now it is evident, that the singularity, mysticism, and passion, of which you speak, cannot be of that nature which partakes either of truth, learning, or reason; because you have made between them a distinct separation; consequently, must be founded upon ignorance, falsehood and folly. As many are to be found in your parish whose minds are uncultivated, and you have taken upon you the holy office "solely to promote the glory of God and the edification of his people," your preaching must be proportioned to that design; and therefore, must be made up of ignorance, falsehood and folly; because you

design to edify a people many of whom are not affected by either "*learning, truth, or reason!*" In this case, what are we to think of your character as a gospel minister, propagating ignorance, falsehood, and folly? But if we suppose your preaching to be founded in learning, truth, or reason, and the uncultivated mind is unaffected thereby, it follows, that your methods of preaching cannot be calculated to do them any good; or you must retract what you have so peremptorily asserted above. In either case, you pay but an awkward compliment to your own reputation, or to the understanding of your hearers. If you persevere in the sentiment contained in the above quotation, what must we think of your judgment? If you retract, you know who has said, (p. 63) "what a fine compliment is this to your followers understanding, and to your own integrity; what fools have you made of them, and what a knave of yourself!"

It is but fair however to say, that in your last page you seem to quit the field under the influence of apparent candour: your words are, "let us look on our fellow Christians with eyes of candour, of compassion, and of brotherly love; ready to make allowances for the infirmities common to man; and to assist our weaker brethren by every act of kindness."—Who would have thought, that out of the same mouth could proceed blessings and cursings, candour and intolerance, in so glaring a manner! Who would have imagined that you, who thus breathe good will towards men, could have so abused the Methodists, as in the pamphlets in question you have done!

I ask not what must be the effects of your anger, or what language you would use if you were provoked; but if this be your candour, to tell the world that "the wiser sort turn rogues and debauchees; that Methodism does not stop here, but that it plunges its votaries into every vice; that in its sober moments it is polluted with adultery, and in its frenzy it is embued with murder:"—if this, I say, be the assisting your "weaker brethren by every act of kindness," I confess it seems to me to be a mode of candour calculated upon the meridian of Persia, or Barbary; and would fill no despicable page in the journals of Muley Ismael, or Kouli Khan.

Deception, Sir, must necessarily be the result of error. And though certain propositions carry with them a promising aspect, they may be nevertheless inherently base. They may assume a specious appearance in their first conclu-

sions, and promise fair to land us safe; till traced through all their latent labyrinths of deduction, the alembics through which they pass disrobing them of their fair pretences, present to the astonished view their native deformity; while discernment is almost at a loss to trace the relation which subsists between them, and the primary causes from whence they sprang.

An instance of this may be found in Mr. P.'s Letter to Dr. Hawker, p. 38, where you seem astonished, that Dr. H. should "include in the number of lost sinners, thousands and tens of thousands who every Lord's day attend the service of the church."—However excellent this doctrine (which must be opposed to that of Dr. Hawker) may appear to Mr. Polwhele, yet it is very evident that he is ashamed of its effects. For (in p. 81) where he gives an instance of a man who expected that church and sacrament would supply the lack of a little honesty, he views the monster with detestation, scorns to acknowledge him, and therefore calls him a methodist; while every lineament and feature in this man's profession sufficiently demonstrates him a legitimate child of p. 38.

Having gone through your Letters to Dr. Hawker, I now proceed to your "*Anecdotes of Methodism*." But before I enter immediately on the anecdotes themselves, I cannot avoid taking notice of one general ground of your charges against us—I mean enthusiasm. Enthusiasm has been the ground-work of almost every charge made by you, either on Dr. Hawker or ourselves. But before we can admit this charge, it is but reasonable that we should know what enthusiasm is.

The venerable name of Locke, whose writings have done honour to his country, needs no comment. To his chapter on enthusiasm I refer such of my readers as wish for a more copious definition than is contained in the following quotations:

"In all that is of Divine revelation, there is need of no other proof but that it is an inspiration from God; for he can neither deceive, nor be deceived. But how shall it be known that any proposition in our minds is a truth infused by God; a truth which is revealed to us by him, which he declares to us, and therefore we ought to believe?"—Locke's Essay, vol. 2, p. 323.

"He that will not give himself up to the extravagancies of delusion and error, must bring this guide of his light

“ within to the trial. God, when he makes the prophet,
 “ does not unmake the man : he leaves all his faculties in
 “ their natural state, to enable him to judge of his inspira-
 “ tions, whether they be of divine original or no. When he
 “ illuminates the mind with supernatural light, he does not
 “ extinguish that which is natural. Reason must be our
 “ last judge and guide in every thing. I do not mean that
 “ we must consult reason, and examine whether a proposi-
 “ tion revealed from God can be made out by natural prin-
 “ ciples, and if it cannot, that we may then reject it ; but
 “ consult it we must, and by it examine whether it be a
 “ revelation from God or no : and if reason finds it to be
 “ revealed from God, reason then declares for it, as much as
 “ for any other truth, and makes it one of her dictates.”

Ibid. p. 324.

“ If this internal light, or any proposition which under
 “ that title we take for inspired, be conformable to the
 “ principles of reason, or to the word of God, which is at-
 “ tested revelation, reason warrants it, and we may safely
 “ receive it for true, and be guided by it in our belief and
 “ actions.”—Ibid. p. 325.

Thus far Mr. Locke ; and on these rules which he has laid down, I shall take my stand : and if it can be made out that Methodism is within the limits which he defines as exempted from enthusiasm, I doubt not but men of candour will admit my claim. The consistency of our doctrines with reason and the word of God, is a point which you have not yet formally called in question ; and the chief hint you have dropped on this head is, p. 4, where you say, “ I am
 “ afraid that men of sense may deem it ridiculous, to define
 “ at all the religion of enthusiasts and hypocrites.” Of this solitary hint I shall take but little notice, only observing that the doctrines of Methodism, whenever you shall call them into question, will admit of some defence. My present design is to repel the charge of enthusiasm, which you have made upon us, and to shew that the actions which are countenanced by us, go hand in hand with the word of God and right reason.

First, then, right reason will inform us, that every man is accountable to God for the morality or immorality of his actions ; and, if so, every man must be free. And, provided these actions interfere not with the safety of civil society, justice will most decidedly guarantee to every man the right of worshipping God agreeable to the dictates of his own con-

science. This will appear more evident, when we consider, that God only has a right to reward and punish in another state of being, the good or evil which we have done in this. And if God reward or punish man for his present actions, it follows, that this must be a probationary state. And if probationary, man must have the liberty of moral action, or the idea of probation is done away, and we become as "passive engines, void of praise or blame." If it were not so, of what use is our discernment of error? Of what use is the Bible? Of what use is instruction? Why else was conscience given to man? Why is not coercion substituted in the room of persuasion; and implicit obedience demanded, where reason can have no plea? If man be deprived of this right, can he be accountable to God? Without this right, can his actions partake either of virtue or vice? Can God be just, in rewarding or punishing man for actions which must necessarily result from a right which he never had? Certainly not. Both scripture and reason, and the laws of our country, unite in one testimony in favour of this right, which is guaranteed by the principles of eternal justice. Thus far we are not enthusiasts.

From the admission of this right, will necessarily flow another. For if we have this right guaranteed by the laws of God and our country, the liberty of exercising this right follows of course. For if that power which grants to me a right, prevents or restricts me in the exercise of it, the right itself becomes a mere *non-entity*, and consequently is done away. Besides, to suppose we have a right to worship God, and yet have not a right to exercise it, includes this positive contradiction, that we have a right, and have *not* a right, to worship God at the same time.

That these rights have not been always enjoyed, I readily admit; but this cannot affect the rights themselves, nor alter the identity of things. They may be invaded in a thousand instances, but their boundaries are immoveable; and whether the invasion arises from the despotism of rulers, or the rebellion of subjects, it is equally a transgression against the eternal order of things.

It was an invasion of these rights by the papal power, which rendered a reformation necessary, and called forth the talents of Wickliffe, and Luther; and the assumption of this right by Henry the VIII. occasioned its fuller restoration in his days. To say nothing of the revocation of the edict of Nants, the massacre of St. Bartholomew's, or the miseries which have been occasioned in other countries; it was an

invasion of these rights that occasioned the martyrdom in Smithfields, and the ejection of two thousand ministers in the reign of Charles the Second.

But the lenient spirit which diffused itself through succeeding generations, has softened the asperity of our forefathers, and meliorated the condition of man. The lines and boundaries of human power, as pertaining to conscience, were defined and fixed by the Bill of Rights. Coercion, which can only exist in, and be the prerogative of, the civil power, directed its views to the guarantee of these rights; and it has hitherto preserved them from the violation of invaders.

The Toleration Act*, which was passed in the first year of William and Mary, gave a sanction to the whole, and ratified the present order of things. Succeeding monarchs have confirmed by their declarations the wisdom and justice of our ancestors; and these declarations, together with the Bill of Rights, have been uniformly supported by the illustrious house of Hanover.† In this auspicious area it is that we live; and by virtue of this right it is, that the worship of God claims its existence in all its forms; and by an undue exercise of this right (or rather by a departure from it) you have, in your late pamphlets, invaded the rights of thousands whom you never saw, and who never did you wrong.—The right and its exercise being established thus far, on what principles can you despise field preaching? Is God more attached to an house built of wood and stone, then he is to

* That the methodist preachers have not uniformly availed themselves of the privileges of this Act, I readily admit; and their reasons, in many cases, for not doing so, are, because they would not, by prostituting a religious immunity, exempt themselves from secular offices. The lenity of the times have not rendered an attention to the punctilios of form uniformly necessary. It is persecution arising from domestic quarters, which has rendered the adoption of such measures necessary; but it is well known, that the law in such cases provides for their security. By an Act 10 Ann, c. 2, s. 8, "If any person dissenting from the Church of England (not in holy orders, or pretended holy orders, or pretending to holy orders, nor any preachers or teacher of any congregation) who should have been entitled to the benefit of the Toleration Act, if he had duly taken, made, and subscribed the oaths and declaration, or otherwise qualified himself as required by the Act, shall be prosecuted on any of the penal statutes from which protestant dissenters are exempted by the said Act,—shall, at any time during such prosecution, take, make, and subscribe the said oath and declaration, or, being a quaker, shall qualify according to that Act, either in the manner prescribed by that Act, or before two justices, who shall take and return the same to the next sessions, to be there recorded; such person shall be entitled to the benefit of the Act, as fully as if he had qualified himself in the time prescribed by the Act, and shall from thenceforth be discharged from all the penalties and forfeitures incurred by force of any of the aforesaid penal statutes."

† The result has been, that the methodists have sprung up; and propagated the doctrines of the gospel so effectually, that near half a million of human beings, collected from "the scum of Cornwall, the rabble of Bilston, the wild beasts of Walsal, and the turnkeys of Newgate," have, from fierce barbarians, been broken intomen,

the place whence that wood and stone were taken? Certainly not. And if Jesus could teach from a ship, and the apostle kneel on the sea shore, an imitation of their conduct is perfectly justifiable: and thus far we are not enthusiasts. You affect to despise Wesley for melting in pity over the unenlightened poet; but in what manner does Mr. Polwhele treat those lines of the same author when he ridicules field preaching—

“ In the same temple, the resounding wood,
 “ All vocal beings hymn’d their equal God;
 “ Pride then was not, nor arts that pride to aid;
 “ Man walk’d with beast, joint tenant of the shade.”—Pope.

Instead of admitting this generous sentiment, you inculcate an idea, that even Omnipotence is circumscribed in its benevolence; and, muffled in the narrowness of you own conceptions, you pour your anathemas at once upon half a million of people, who dare appeal to the laws of nature, of God, and of their country, for a justification of those actions and sentiments which you at once calumniate and despise. Peace to the manes of such sentiments!

That you have a right to think for yourself, is unquestionable from what I have advanced above; but it will not from thence follow, that you have a right to think for others. To assume this, is to invade the rights of others, and render them no longer accountable to God. And such an action as cannot be supported by reason, nor scripture, is, according to Mr. Locke—enthusiasm.

If we therefore have a right to worship God and to exercise that worship, the right of choosing a place follows of course; and consequently is not enthusiasm. And if, by the liberty of its owner, we prefer a field to worship God in, “ the barn, the stable, the tub or upping-stock”—and if in either of those places we sing, we pray, we preach, we admonish, we instruct, or be instructed (provided we invade not the rights of another by so doing) it is only acting in conformity to these right, which Mr. Polwhele may grin at, and despise, but which no classical taste, no poetical refinements, “ though barb’d with wit, or pointed with “ lampoon,” can ever wrench from our hands. From these principles issue also another right; that of the matter, manner, time, and place. The doctrines are not yet questioned; I shall say nothing therefore on the matter of our preaching. It is admitted, that between the hours of ten and twelve, the worship of God is justifiable (on a Sunday) and if so, on what principle does the worship of God be-

come unjustifiable between twelve and one o'clock? or at any hour in which the Methodists preaching begins? The same God which presides over twelve o'clock, presides over every other hour; therefore in point of time, we are not enthusiasts. The length of a sermon is perfectly justifiable on the same principle, as well as the numbers which assemble; and therefore Methodism is not enthusiasm.

Far be it from me to insinuate that every individual member of the Methodist societies have uniformly been guided by these principles. They may have deviated in numberless instances; but then those deviations are no more chargeable upon Methodism, than the contradictions of Mr. Polwhele are on archbishop Cranmer.

I now enter upon the *Anecdotes of Methodism*;* of which justice compels me to say, that the author has shewn more originality of invention, than industry in collecting of facts. They display much art, and more wit; but more malignity than either. I am, however, obliged to take up some of the reader's attention in examining those preliminary remarks with which the *Anecdotes* are immediately connected. This will appear the more necessary, when we consider the uses to which they are to be applied, and under cover of which are concealed the *Anecdotes* themselves, to render them less suspicious to the credulous and unthinking, and to accommodate the venom of malignity to the taste of unsuspecting innocence.

You, accordingly, begin with this terrific frontispiece. "*The author of the Anecdotes has this day offered to verify them upon oath; being ready to swear that all the facts which he has related from his own personal knowledge and observation are true; and that he believes the rest, as communicated by persons of unquestionable veracity, to be true likewise.*"

Such is the introduction to the work before us! But when, or where, or before whom, this oath was offered to be taken, we are no where told. Nor have we so much as one single voucher that ever the offer of an oath was made; though the authenticity of the *Anecdotes* is supposed to derive support from that oath; which, had it been taken, would have wanted that very support itself which it is intended to convey. It is intended to give to the *Anecdotes* a weight which it does not possess itself, and to communicate

* If my readers will give themselves the trouble to consult an old pamphlet, entitled, "*Scottish Presbyterian Eloquence Displayed*," they will probably discover the true source whence many of these *Anecdotes* derive their origin.

a credit to which itself has no claim. Besides, an attempt to establish by oath, facts which are supposed to stand on the evidence of their own existence ; is an impeachment of the facts themselves. And that fact is thereby rendered doubtful, which, from the nature of its circumstances, precluded the necessity of external aid. If the Anecdotes which Mr. P. has related from his own personal knowledge be true, they must be self-evident ; and then an oath is useless and unnecessary. But if they be false, his oath cannot make them true.

To pretend to speak of the visibility of facts, which cannot afford sufficient evidence of their own reality, when it is the *visibility* of the fact which is intended to be impressed upon the public mind ; is like a man who would demonstrate the magnitude and distance of a star, by Mr. Polwhele's History of Devon ; or prove the hardness of a piece of oak from a chronological table : which, instead of adding authority to the fact, is an attack upon the fact itself ; and, from the nature of this proof, that becomes doubtful, which might be otherwise received without a scruple. Be this as it may, the offer of an oath declares the necessity of one ; and that necessity demonstrates the insufficiency of other proof.

It seems, however, that the gentleman with whom Mr. P. conferred on the occasion, thought differently from him ; and was, we are told, decidedly of opinion, that "*the name of Mr. P. in the title-page, would be sufficient to substantiate any fact ; and from his situation as a magistrate, such an attestation would be degrading to his character.*" Who this gentleman is, I know not ; nor can discover any end that this can answer, except it be to tell the world that you are a magistrate ; and to let us see how far you have been imposed upon by the finesse of your friend, to send into the world a relation of facts, without their evidences ; to relinquish all proof, in favour of your name in the title page, and to omit that very oath which even yourself thought necessary. Thus, by the advice of this gentleman, you have not only omitted your proofs, but you have declined your oath ; and *your name in the title-page* is made sufficient to substantiate every fact. As the Anecdotes now stand before the world, they are not so well authenticated as a quack doctor's hand-bill ; they carry duplicity in their very front.

Why the proof of an assertion should be degrading to your character, or to the character of any other man, is

rather problematical ; yet it seems this is the case. And to avoid that degradation which would attach itself to you in producing your proofs, you have left us in possession of your own doubts, and deprived us of that oath by which you intended to remove them. By calling these doubts into being, and not putting them to rest, like angry ghosts, they haunt you through every page, and stare you in the face at every questionable corner.

Such is the produce of your first page ! And from such hopeful beginnings what have we not to expect in the progress of the work ? What sterling truths may we not hope to find from the pen of a gentleman who sets out in his first page with calling in question the truth of his own relation !

You observe, it is true (p. 24) that "*if any person wish to become acquainted with my authorities, from other motives than impertinent curiosity, malevolence, or spleen ; let them apply to me for information, at any justice meeting at Mawnan-Smith, within twelve months from the date of these papers, when they shall receive every reasonable satisfaction.*"

It is plain, from this formal parade, that every reasonable satisfaction is not yet given ; because, to obtain this, we must apply to *Mawnan-Smith*. If the evidence adduced be insufficient to give reasonable satisfaction, how can you think any reasonable man will give you credit for your assertions ? But if it be sufficient, why must we apply to *Mawnan-Smith* ? to trace the equivocal duplicity of this quotation through all its intricacies, would swell a pamphlet of itself ; and baffle my design, which is only to touch, in this stage of the work, on the most prominent absurdities and palpable contradictions.

But why, Sir, must all enquiries be made at *Mawnan-Smith* ? Why at a justice meeting ? Are your vouchers all residing there ? Are you incapable of giving reasonable satisfaction in any other place ? Or are you apprehensive that an application might be made at the vicarage-house of Manaccan, where truth could not be spoken with ? These questions demand an answer : for your mode of giving *reasonable satisfaction*, wears but an unpromising aspect ; it carries on its very face the imprimatur of deception and duplicity.

Besides, you have not told us what you mean by *impertinent curiosity* ; nor who is to be the judge of its existence ; nor the times when these meetings are held at *Mawnan-Smith* ? And yet every one who entertains those very doubts which you entertain yourself, and who has not

a friend at hand to hint that "an oath would degrade your character," must apply at Mawnan-Smith! So that if a thousand men, though scattered through the remotest parts of the kingdom, wish to have "reasonable satisfaction," they must all apply at Mawnan-Smith! And should any be so fortunate as to pass your ordeal, they will then be referred for your authorities to "Greenland, Zembla, or the Lord knows where!" Besides, the degrading situation in which any applicant must appear—the apparent insult that must be offered—the answers that must be given to such enquiries as would probably be made—would all give the enquirers an appearance of being actuated by impertinent curiosity, if not malevolence and spleen; and thereby defeat that information it was designed to procure.

Such, Sir, is the first leaf of your book! Truth peeps from behind the mask and betrays imposture; and he whose credulity is equal to the imposition, may swallow the Anecdotes alive, either with an oath or without one, or whether taken before a magistrate, or a broom-stick.

The parallels which have been drawn by bishop Lavington between the Methodists and papists, and the sanction which his Anecdotes are made to give yours, would justify me in following your example, by drawing comparisons that would be less acceptable to yourself, than your definition of Methodism is to the fraternity. The striking likeness that many sentiments in your *Anecdotes* and *Letters*, bear to those of *Paine*, would almost tempt me to lay them beside each another, were not the family likeness so conspicuous, that the comparison would appear more severe than the hints I have given. It is not by the Methodists alone that this likeness is perceived. The avowed enemies of Christianity have expressed their approbation of your conduct. And one in particular (an avowed deist) actually observed to me, that he thought "if *Paine* were present, he could afford you much assistance in the present contest." What then, Sir, has not Christianity to fear, when even one of her professed ministers is caressed by infidels? what has not religion to hope, when even the disciples of *Paine* think that he could render assistance to the cause of Mr. Polwhele!

"In descending to my MY ANECDOTES (you say, p. 8) I think it highly necessary to premise, that my SOLE intention in publishing them is to prove the bad tendency of Methodism in general; and that, by instancing the irregularities or vices of one Methodist, I would on no account fix a stigma on every

"other, as though the disease of a single person must of course infect the whole society." This apparent candour seems very plausible, and to those who are unacquainted with your writings, the varnish may eclipse the error.

But the "word Methodism (you say) is often applied to persons truly and sincerely religious, and in this sense I have never used it." And yet, (in p. 83, First Letter) "*all* are equally alienated, *all* looking for some emergency, and *all* ripe for rebellion." But in this general sense Mr. P. has never used it !!! But to proceed. Can that prove the bad tendency of Methodism in general, which exempts from the general charge those who, according to your own account, adhere to its principles, and come under the denomination of Methodists? If the disease of a single person cannot infect the whole society, how can Mr. P. from this disease of a single person, prove the bad tendency of Methodism? If you can prove it, you falsify your own declaration quoted above; if not, you fail in your main proposition, and cannot prove the bad tendency of Methodism in general; in admitting either case, you contradict yourself; and in denying both, you bid poor common sense good night.

In p. 4, we have been favoured, it is true, with this definition of Methodism: "we term those Methodists, who, whether clergymen or laymen, are methodically and ostentatiously religious; * who affect to be more righteous than others. Whether this definition be acceptable to the fraternity, or not, is to me a matter of perfect indifference." —How any man is to be "*ostentatiously religious*," is rather problematical, not to say contradictory: but it is Mr. Polwhele's; and that is a sufficient answer to all such questions. But if this definition be agreeable to truth, why does not Mr. P. prove it; if not, why did he make it?

After having p. 58, analysed Methodism into a monster; after having told us, that "it has a tendency to betray its votaries into every irregularity, and to plunge them into every vice;" this pious vicar prefers this prayer; the Methodists are ashamed of "the things laid to their charge; and their shame, I trust in God, will operate in preventing the repetition of such enormities!" Now, if we admit Mr. P.'s above definition to be just, what ground has he to

* Mr. P. might with as much propriety, have described the weather in this season to be "coldly hot," or drily wet," or that his intellects when he wrote this definition were "sensibly insensible;" as to define the methodists to be "*ostentatiously religious*," or proudly humble. The one has as much meaning as the other. And the true definition of Mr. P.'s definition is; that it is a piece of ostentatious nonsense.

trust in God that they will not be guilty in future of such enormities? if unjust, what credit is due to his definition, or his intention in making it? The same cause must always produce the same effect; and that which has a tendency to betray its votaries into every irregularity, and to plunge them into every vice, can never afford you any reason to trust in God that no such effects will be produced in future. If, therefore, Mr. P. has any rational ground for his trust, he must disown his own definition; or his trust will be a mere specimen of finished hypocrisy.

"The incidents which I have enumerated are for the most part, such as came to my knowledge by mere chance; with very little pains, I doubt not but I might make great additions to these casual notices." So says p. 58. But on turning back to p. 47, we find, *"On this head I shall not enlarge, but present my readers with two extracts from letters addressed to me for the purpose."* On these two quotations a few plain questions will arise. If your notices be casual, and such as came by mere chance, how came these letters to be addressed to you on purpose? Or if they were addressed to you on purpose, how can your notices be casual? Or admitting that these letters (though addressed by their writers on purpose) came to your hand without your previous knowledge; they then either prove in you a previous application, or they do not. If they do, how can your notices be by mere chance? if not, how came the writers of these letters to consider you as the receiver-general of scandal?

In p. 52, speaking of the insane man of Feock (which shall be noticed in its proper place) you have these words: "he absolutely lost his senses, and never after recovered them." But in p. 56, "the father of the child told me that he had long since recovered his senses, and is perfectly steady and composed." On this business, the principal question is, which of these two stories must we believe? If we believe yours, the "gentleman of respectability," his information, and Mr. Bate into the bargain, must tumble down headlong at once; but if we believe theirs, the fate which awaits yours I need not name. The many inconsistencies and contradictions, to say nothing worse, which in the course of this work I have made fully to appear, place your averment in an equivocal point of view; and nothing can be said in its behalf, till an oath ceases to degrade your character, or we apply at Mawnan-Smith: while the "gentleman of respectability" concurs with Mr.

Bate to establish a fact in contradiction to your own relation. It is observable, that this unhappy affair has had an edition in your First Letter to Dr. H. and you have now given it a second in your Anecdotes. This story, in your First Letter contradicts truth; in the Anecdotes, your account contradicts the former, and truth together; while the relation given by Mr. Bate falsifies the account given in the Letter to Dr. H. and that in the Anecdotes also. Yet, strange as it may appear, these contradictions are all recorded by Mr. Polwhele; and, what may seem still stranger, the "author" of these Anecdotes has this day offered to verify them "upon oath!!!" *

In p. 5 and 6, you seem very solicitous to exempt Bishop Lavington from the imputation of a change of sentiment; which you think a reflection on his character. And you have not only noticed the observations made by the Helston preacher and Mr. Carrington, but you even anticipate future objections. I know nothing of Bishop. L. or his Enthusiasm, but through the late publications. You make one observation, however, which cannot fail to strike every attentive reader: (p. 6) your words are, "to the last, he always spoke of the Methodists as a fraternity composed of enthusiasts and hypocrites." On this the obvious remark is, that he must have died in love with enthusiasts and hypocrites, or he could not have died in charity with all men. If the former, what credit is due to his Enthusiasm? if the latter, what are we to think of his enmity in his departing moments? If your observations, taken all together, be true, what a fine compliment have you paid to his Lordship's memory! if false, what credit will be due to your assertion? Whatever might have been said by the Helston preacher, or Mr. Carrington, or any other person, this stroke is all your own, for which I expect you will not receive the thanks of his Lordship's friends. There is still another inference deducible from the above. If Mr. Polwhele can thus stab the reputation of his friend, while he is avowedly vindicating it; what credit will his assertions be entitled to while vilifying the Methodists, of whom he is the avowed enemy? Like Ishmael, his hand is against every man's; and friends and foes feel alike the effects of his literary vengeance. His creed seems to be a compound of deism and contradictions, erected in the suburbs of infi-

* It is but just however to inform the reader, in apology for Mr. P. that these contradictions come under the head of insanity; thus literally verifying that line of Mr. Pope—"The sound must be an echo to the sense."

delity. Contradiction ! didst thou ever meet with so sincere a friend, so faithful a devotee ? Many men are fond of contradicting others, but it seems alike to this gentlemen, whether it be another or himself, so that he may contradict !

But it is not with principle or practice alone that Mr. P. is at war. The sweeping strokes of his literary compasses bear down all before them, and deal their threatenings alike to truth and error. Their extensive range encircle almost every thing but what they ought. Articles, Liturgy, Homilies, and even the Bible itself, are taken by storm. Methodism and Calvinism sink alike. Wesley, Whitfield, and even bishop Lavington, are thrown together into the receiver of his air pump, and in the excess of his charity they descend together. Were your censures confined to any particular mode of conduct which we pursue, we might have discovered our error, and avoided it in future. But such is the strange construction of your genius, that no action of ours can escape your blame. Even those actions which are not only defensible, but praise-worthy, and would confer more real honour on their imitators than despisers ; these actions suffer devastation in your literary havoc. It is thus your compasses go round, and round, and round again ; till the spot,

“ Which seem'd a garden, in its loveliest dress,

“ Before them, and behind a wilderness ;

“ Leaves not a plant t'invite the tiller's care,

“ Or blade, that might redeem it from despair.”

If we attend the church, you call it “ *hypocrisy* ;” if we stay away, you call it “ *secession*.” If we be silent, we may be known “ *by the demureness of our looks* ;” if we speak, it is “ *horse-block eloquence*.” If we hear others, it is “ *ignorance with itching ears* ;” if we forbear, it is “ *uncharitableness*.” If we extend our charity only to our own sect, we are “ *fanatics* ;” if to others, we become a “ *formidable body, that may endanger both church and state*.” If we perform religious duties in public, we are “ *ostentatiously religious* ;” if in private, it is “ *uncleanness and debauchery*.” If we speak truth, it is “ *prevarication* ;” if false, it is (as it ought) “ *lying*.” Thus are we bandied about by Mr. P. and the assistance he has derived from *prevarication, lying, uncharitableness, uncleanness, and hypocrisy*. When we find an unworthy member in our society, if we turn him out it is “ *effrontery for which it would be difficult to find a parallel* ;” if we keep him, then “ *Methodism plunges its votaries into every vice*.” If we apply to scripture, you pursue us there : when we say that by the deeds of the law shall no flesh be justified in the

sight of God ; you say “ *then it appears we are not the better qualified on the score of morality.*” If we say, that all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God ; you exclaim, “ *then it seems you include thousands in the number of lost sinners who attend the service of the church.*” So that, if we read the Bible for ourselves, it is *showing contempt of the regular clergy ;*” and if we call your veracity into question, it is degrading to your character. Many men can commence an attack from one point, some from many points, but Mr. Polwhele, from all at once ; and “ the wild beasts “ of Walsal, are hunted like the scum of Cornwall,” and driven round the circle to bear the scars which your calumny inflicts. From such envy, hatred, malice, and uncharitableness, “ good Lord deliver us !”

But there is still another crime of which the Methodists are guilty, (p. 33,) “ according to Mr. Wesley’s own confession, a Methodist preacher told a woman that she would “ be damned, if she did not know her sins forgiven.”

The “ *communion of saints and the forgiveness of sins*” is read by Mr. Polwhele every Lord’s day, as a part of his belief ; and if so, on what principle does he now call that very doctrine into question ? It may be said, indeed, that it is not the doctrine itself, but the evidence of it that is here reprobated. It may be so, and perhaps this subterfuge will afford but little help to Mr. Polwhele’s cause. For if the forgiveness of sins be believed ; while the evidence of that belief is disowned ; on what principle has he any knowledge of the fact itself ? And if you retain the fact, and yet disown the only evidence which is capable of producing rational conviction ; the fact itself is reduced to a level with imposition, and is believed without being known. The man who can swallow this (if it be Mr. P. himself) is verily the greatest enthusiast alive.

From these detached absurdities of Mr. Polwhele, I shall turn to a nearer inspection of the *Anecdotes* themselves. They involve three distinct questions. The first is, whether Methodism necessarily leads to those actions which you have recorded as *Anecdotes of Methodism* ?* The second, whether the eccentricities of a few be attributable to the whole body collectively, or only individually ? The third

* The definitions which have so repeatedly been given of Methodism, make it unnecessary for me now to define it. Those who are acquainted with Methodism, want no such information ; and those who think like Mr. Polwhele, would not admit it, were it to be done. I have therefore taken a different method ; and contend, that the same cause cannot produce two opposite effects.

is ; has Mr. Polwhele stated facts, or not ? To each of these points I beg leave to call the reader's attention.

To admit a principle, is to admit its universal application ; and as far as its nature, under the impression of similar circumstances, can extend, it must necessarily produce the same effects. It is from the effects produced, that the cause or principle is denominated and known. And without these consequences which follow, the idea of principle is done away. Hence the idea of parent includes that of offspring ; the idea of cause includes that of effect ; and the idea of principle includes the idea of consequence ; which connexion are uniformly necessary to their existence. Nor is it possible that the same cause can produce two opposite effects ; to suppose this, is to suppose it to act in opposition to itself ; and if it act in opposition to itself ; its opposition must be equal, or partial ; if equal, it can produce no effect at all ; because the opposition must be equal to the impulse ; if partial, the inferior must always be subdued by the superior ; and one effect alone will be still produced, as much as though there were no partial opposition. It therefore necessarily follows, that Methodism cannot produce good and evil. And if the vices which Mr. P. has stated, be deducible from Methodism, Methodism cannot produce any other effects ; the baseness and falsehood of which conclusion, the nation at large is fully able to deny.

Without trespassing upon the readers time in detailing proofs of my proposition, I shall appeal to one which I hope Mr. P. will not deny. (P. 8 and 9) "*I readily acknowledge, that among its professors, there are great numbers whose unaffected piety would stand the test of the severest scrutiny.*" Now, if we admit the truth of this statement, taken from the mouth of an enemy, and admit that the same cause cannot produce two opposite effects ; it necessarily follows, that Methodism does not lead to vice ; consequently, the title of Mr. P.'s book is false, and he stands convicted, not only of false reasoning, but of attributing effects to certain principles which, in the nature of things, are incapable of producing them.

As Methodism does not necessarily, so neither can it accidentally, lead to vice. The same arguments which are against its necessity, are equally forcible against its accidents. Besides, no known principles whatever can produce accidents ; the conception itself is contradictory. For to suppose accidents to result from any given principles, is to destroy

their identity ; and ceasing to be accidents, they become effects. And to attribute an accident to any specific cause whatever, includes this plain contradiction, that they are accidents, and not accidents, at the same time. Methodism therefore is not capable of producing vice, either by accident or necessity.

I now turn to the second question ; namely, whether the eccentricities of a few, be attributable to the whole, or not? You will easily perceive, that the ground which I now assume is on a presumption that all your Anecdotes are true, and that they really exist as pourtrayed in your book. The primary principles being already proved, it requires not much argument to establish this. You must be well aware, Sir, that if this principle be admitted, the most dreadful consequences must ensue. The robberies, the murders, the adulteries, the prophaneness, the drunkenness, with which the world abounds, would involve every order of society, and be charged even on God himself. The treachery of a Judas, the apostacy of a Peter, the uncleanness of a David, and the idolatry of a Solomon, must all be then charged not only upon the Bible, but upon God ; the blasphemy of which requires no comment. As these actions cannot apply collectively ; so neither can the vices of any individual Methodist justify such an indiscriminate charge. It confounds vice with virtue ; it breaks down all the boundaries of moral rectitude ; and even justice itself can be no more. It also destroys the identity of man. Individuality must be done away, and all mankind must be melted down into one general mass. Individuality however does exist : this is evident from sensation ; and therefore the consequences which are connected with individuality must necessarily follow. The actions of individuals are therefore attributable only to themselves.

The number of Methodists, you say, are about " half a million." Now admitting this statement to be true ; and that they have been collected from the " scum of Cornwall, " the rabble of Bilston, the wild beasts of Walsal, and the " turnkeys of Newgate ;" (p. 10.) is it any wonder that you should be able to collect about fifty worthless members ? especially, when you take your range through half a century, and tour thro' different latitudes, to complete that number ? Besides you have collected from bishop Lavington, you have employed emissaries, you have received letters addressed to you on purpose, and had recourse to the " gen-

"a gentleman of respectability," to whose friendly advice you are so much indebted. I say again, admitting the truth of every Anecdote; considering the space thro' which you have travelled, the records to which you have had recourse, the methods you have taken to obtain your information, and allowing you to add as many more as you have collected, it is a testimony in itself which does honour to Methodism. That there are members who swerve from their professions I readily allow. They may sometimes act under the impulse of mistaken zeal, sometimes from a principle of inherent baseness, and produce actions which may name the villain. These actions you may have beheld; but, beholding them abstracted from their real causes, associating in your mind the two ideas of the action and profession, and losing sight of the real cause, you palm upon the principles of their profession, those actions with which neither principle nor profession has any relation. It is a *departure* from Methodism, which produces those actions you charge upon it: and the mere profession furnishes the superficial observer with the weapons of reproach. But to a mind like yours, capable of distinguishing between men and things, causes and effects; and yet, from some latent cause, suspending your judgment, and blending together what even nature herself has made distinct; presents to the mind an idea which I must be beholden to charity itself if I call only an error.

Eccentricities in action must always arise from eccentric causes; and an action inherently base, must date its existence from a similar cause; similar in its properties, and only discoverable in its effects. To charge therefore the vices of an individual or a whole body of people, merely because they make a profession of those principles from whence that individual has evidently departed, is an inference worthy only of a mind intoxicated with prejudice and pride.

I have hitherto admitted the authenticity of all the Anecdotes; and have been considering briefly how far the principles of Methodism are concerned, and how these actions tend to criminate the whole body; and I hope that the reasons I have assigned will be thought sufficient to satisfy every impartial mind, first, that Methodism does not lead to vice, either by necessity or accident; secondly, that the crimes of a few, can relate only to the individuals who are guilty.

I now turn to the facts themselves. I will begin with your postscript, p. 4. "*Since the printing of these pages, I*

“ have had an opportunity of observing one distinguishing trait
 “ in the character of the Methodists. It was at a justice meeting
 “ at Mawnan-Smith, where the connexion between enthusiasm
 “ and lust, or the easy transition from the methodistic spirit of
 “ love to carnal desire, was indisputably proved. Nicholas
 “ Trebilcock, of Peran-Arwothal, was summoned to appear
 “ before Sir Michael Nowell and myself, to answer the complaint
 “ of Joseph Pasco. Pasco (who is a Methodist) was certainly
 “ beat; though not till after repeated provocation. Pasco and
 “ a stranger, a brother methodist, had entered the public-house,
 “ and told Trebilcock that he would be damned if he refused to
 “ entertain the poor without money or price. They went up stairs,
 “ called for liquor, and (as Trebilcock expressed himself) con-
 “ tinued preaching over their bowl. At length they came into
 “ the kitchen; the stranger departed, and Pasco seated himself in
 “ a SETTLE. He then attacked a girl in a rude manner, who
 “ sat employed at her needle. She flew up stairs, he pursued
 “ her, and used her very indecently. He then used another in
 “ a similar manner. The Methodist made no effort to contra-
 “ dict any of these particulars. And, on my asking him how
 “ he could reconcile such indecencies with his professions, he
 “ answered me only with the grimace of hypocrisy, or the grin
 “ of rusticity; and was troubled with no further questions.”—
 Such is Mr. Polwhele’s account.

Since perusing your Anecdotes, I also may say, I have
 had, in this very story, an opportunity of observing one dis-
 tinguishing trait in the character and conduct of Mr. Pol-
 whele. I have had, from Mr. Trebilcock’s own mouth, the
 story which the above is designed to imitate: and if mis-
 representation in your relation, or injustice in your detail,
 together with the most abominable falsehoods which per-
 vades your whole narrative, can fix a stigma on your book,
 I am bound, in justice to the cause which I have espoused,
 to give to the world at large a relation of the whole affair.

It was on the 12th of June, that I called at Mr. Trebil-
 cock’s house, when he gave me the following account: The
 stranger was in his house, and slept there two nights. The
 man was to him a perfect stranger; he had no concern
 whatever in Pasco’s behaviour; did set his face against him;
 upbraided him for his conduct; and offered to appear in Mr.
 Trebilcock’s behalf whenever he was called (as he was going
 to reside at Penryn); said he never saw any man so ill treated
 as he had been in all his life: that the stranger behaved ex-
 tremely well, while in his house, he never saw a man behave

better in all his life; he, however, does not know that he was a Methodist, or that he was not; and that he could not know, as he never saw the man either before or since; that he (Trebilcock) did not, and could not, have told Mr. P. that the stranger was a "brother Methodist," as the man was to him perfectly unknown. Such is his account of the stranger. As to Pasco, he behaved extremely ill: charged Trebilcock with owing him money, although they never had had any dealings together; that Pasco did threaten to beat *Mrs. Trebilcock*, and used her very ill: that Pasco, after he had been beaten by Trebilcock, acknowledged his own baseness, and said he had deserved all that he had met with. But he did not seat himself in the *settle*, though that word is placed in *italics* by Mr. P. (to show, I suppose, his strict adherence to truth.) He did not tell Mr. P. so, and could not, as they have *no settle* in all their house: that the girl whom he attacked, was *not* working at her needle, but was washing up some things in the house. That he never knew any thing about "*preaching* over their bowl," and that the word *preaching* was never used: that Pasco behaved thro' the whole like a madman; swore, and shewed himself very dissolute: that he does not know if Pasco is a Methodist or not; and could not have told Mr. P. any such thing; as he does not recollect ever to have spoken to Pasco for upwards of twenty years. He well recollects, that after Pasco's conduct was heard by Mr. Polwhele, he exclaimed, tho' on the bench, "He is a Methodist, I suppose?" to which Trebilcock replied, he goes to hear them sometimes I believe: that Mr. P. though then on the bench, took occasion to traduce the Methodists, although not one was present, calling them "enthusiasts," &c.

To the truth of this account, both as given to me, and as delivered before the magistrates, Mr. Williams, the constable, who was present at both, most heartily concurred, in presence of a woman whose name I do not know, and of Mr. Thomas Roberts, of Perran-arwothal, in Mr. Trebilcock's own house. Joseph Pasco is a man well known in the neighbourhood of Perran-arwothal, and is universally known to be a dissolute character. In addition to all this, *he neither is, nor ever had been, so far as can be known in the neighbourhood of Perran-arwothal, a Methodist in all his life.* He never was considered so, either by the Methodists or others. I state this on the positive assertions of Mr. Williams, the constable (who is not a Methodist), and of Mr. Thomas

Roberts, who is, and must have known it, had Pasco been a member. I shall make no comment on that character, which can dare to avow such a complication of falsehoods, and obtrude them upon the world. I shall only say, that "*the author of these anecdotes has offered to verify them upon oath; being ready to swear, that the facts which he has related from his own personal knowledge are true:*" and that the whole matter rests here—if Pasco be a Methodist, Mr. P. can prove it without an oath; if he be not, his oath cannot make Pasco a Methodist.

Having dispatched this hydra of a lie, I proceed onward to the first fragment of your *broken lantern*—

"IGNORANCE WITH ITCHING EARS."

P. 9. "*It is to the itching ears of an ignorant rabble that Methodism owes its principal success. From a fondness for novelty, the Penryn Methodists are said to have lent their house to the quakers. When one of the friends took occasion to declaim against baptism, terming it in derision, 'splashing and dashing.' The Methodists were mightily pleased, affirming that his doctrines were the same as their own 'rounder's.'*"

That the Methodists did lend their house at Penryn, is a fact; and that many were well pleased with the doctrine delivered, is equally true; and that the doctrines delivered there were much the same as that of their own *rounders*, is true also. How Mr. P. would have felt himself, had he been present, I take not upon me to say: for the doctrines then delivered were widely different, I am informed, from those to be found in the late pamphlets of a stationary ecclesiastic. The quaker observed, "there is one Lord, one faith, one baptism; that John baptized with water, but that one mightier than John shall baptize us with the Holy Ghost and with fire. And that this was, and is, the *true baptism*, and not the merely splashing and dashing of a little water."

To the truth of this doctrine we hesitate not to subscribe. It is a prominent feature of Methodism, and of the Bible. *Except a man be born again, we believe, he cannot see the kingdom of God*, though he might "moralize with an Epictetus, evangelize with a Whitfield," dramatize with a Shakespeare, or scandalize with a Polwhele. Whether the Methodists, who approve of this doctrine, or Mr. Polwhele, who blames them for their approval, discover the most ignorance, the world will now have an opportunity of deciding. Meanwhile, I turn to p. 11, to consider

"PREVARICATION."

“ A late vicar of St. Gluvias, bearing that the governor of the workhouse had taken upon him to preach, sent for him, and asked him the question, which the man denied. The vicar still pressed the question—did you not preach last night? No, Sir. Were you not at the meeting? Yes, Sir. How were you employed? Why I exhorted! Well, where is the difference between exhorting and preaching? Why preaching is preaching with a text, and exhorting is preaching without a text!”

Now, admitting the truth of all you have here related; the utmost that can be said is, that the man made a blunder, and used the word *preaching* instead of *speaking*. Only change these two words, and all will be (for any thing you have said to the contrary) sound sense, and sterling truth. But though this story is assumed by you, and thus far admitted by me, it does not follow that either the whole or any part thereof is true. The workhouse of St. Gluvias is at present governed by a woman, and it has been under her direction ever since it was left by *Lewis Crowl*. I have called on Lewis Crowl, read to him the anecdote, and questioned him on the affair. He is a Methodist, and from his commencing governor, to this time, is about eighteen years: and positive he is, that in his time, he was never questioned on any such subject, either by the vicar or any other person: that he never heard a syllable of such an affair in all his life, neither as applying to himself, or another; and that he never did preach, nor exhort to a company, in all his life, nor ever presumed to make the attempt. His brother preceded him in the superintendence of the workhouse; and as Lewis Crowl observed, “ if any such thing had happened in my brother’s time, I should certainly have heard something about it.” But he never heard any such thing, either from his brother, or any one else; though the time of which he speaks engrosses near half a century. This account I had from Lewis Crowl’s own mouth, June 12, 1800. He lives in Penryn, and may be consulted by any person who wishes it. When or where this strange nonsense took place, perhaps we shall never know. We must not doubt, however, but that it came well authenticated to Mr. P. and tho’ he may have forgotten his evidence, there can be no doubt but he will be ready to “swear to the truth of what he has related!”—From prevarication, we are carried to

“HYPOCRISY.”

P. 14. “On this head (you say) it will be needless to bring forward examples.”—This is your anecdote, in which

not a single instance is pretended to be adduced. You might, with equal propriety, have had another such under the title of robbery, or burglary, or *borrowing coals, and forswearing it*; or any other vice. But hypocrisy, it seems, is such a "leading feature, that examples would be useless." This is surely a notable way to prove a fact! If a leading feature cannot be proved, how can an inferior one? and if it can, and Mr. P. has not done it, either by argument or example, an attempt to impose upon the world such an egregious non-entity under the auspices of fact, is such a daring piece of impudence and hypocrisy, as need only to be seen to be despised. The man who can admit such a story to arrest his belief, must have mortgaged his senses to implicit submission, and is prepared for every imposition which can enslave the mind of man.

Previous to this strange anecdote of hypocrisy, I should have taken notice of another, under the head of "lying;" but it is of such a mongrel cast, that I chuse to insert it here.

It was early in the month of June, when some occasions called me to Helston, that I had an opportunity of enquiring into the truth of that anecdote which you have recorded under the head of "LYING."

You have said, (p.13) "*Perhaps one of the most daring falsehoods that was ever uttered, was obtruded upon me by the Methodist preacher of Helston; who, denying the truth of one of my anecdotes, asserted, that he had seen and talked with the gentleman from whom it confessedly came; and that that gentleman had disavowed to him viva voce all knowledge of the matter, and all communication with me on the subject. Yet the gentleman never saw him on any such business, nor ever exchanged a syllable with the man in his life.*" P. 22, "*He attacked me in a most insolent manner, calling my Anecdotes lies; insisted on my revocation of such palpable falsehoods, and threatened to bring the people around me in the market-place of Helston, at some future day. That one anecdote, he said, he had already proved to be false; that he himself had applied for information, and the gentleman had disclaimed all knowledge of the affair: that the vices of the Methodists were nothing, when compared with the enormities of the clergy, and their congregations. If a Methodist, says he, be guilty of any flagrant offence, we expel him from the society, and turn him back upon you!!!*" * *Such was the effrontery of this man.*"

If the character of Mr. Richard Andrew, the person to

* The reader ought to be reminded that this Anecdote comes under the head of lying, and is certainly placed with much judgment!

whom you allude, were capable of being injured by Mr. Pol-
 whele, it is fortunate for his reputation that you were not
 the only person present when that conversation took place.
 And it is with peculiar satisfaction that I find I have it in
 my power to contradict, before the world, the assertions
 which I have quoted from your Anecdotes above, and which,
 I hope, will soon appear to be as false as they are daring.

In the shop of *Mr. Oliver Matthews*, many persons were
 present, several of whom were Methodists, and several were
 not; and yet, out of all these possible evidences, not a single
 individual has Mr. P. brought to substantiate the truth of
 his allegations. It is from these evidences, to whom Mr.
 P. has not thought proper to appeal, that I draw my infor-
 mation; and, as far as a negative can be proved, the weight
 of evidence approaches to demonstration.

Mr. Andrew never said that he had seen or conversed
 with the gentleman; much less that he had denied it to him
viva voce: never threatened to bring the people around you
 on a market-day, or in the market-place; and neither market-
 day, nor market-place were ever mentioned: nor that if we
 expel a base member from our societies, we turn him back
 upon you. And, to the particular falsehoods here pointed out
 in Mr. P.'s relation, we, who were present when the conversa-
 tion took place, hesitate not to subscribe our names. And, to
 falsify our just testimony, let Mr. P. from among those who
 were present, produce one individual who will become a
 voucher for the authenticity of his relation, as it stands in
 the Anecdotes of Methodism, and we will stand loaded with
 infamy before the world:—*Richard Andrew, Mary Russell,*
Oliver Matthews.

That a conversation did take place between Mr. P. and
 Mr. Andrew, I have already admitted. And having con-
 tradicted Mr. P.'s account, it is incumbent on me to relate
 the truth.

It was in consequence of Mr. P.'s First Letter to Dr. H.
 in which the reader hath already seen the wanton abuse
 which he has lavished upon the Methodists, that Mr.
 Andrew snatched the opportunity of questioning Mr. P. on
 the truth of the Anecdotes with which he has interlarded
 the notes of that publication. And from a full conviction
 of the falsehood of one instance in particular, Mr. A. began
 as follows: *—"Oliver (says Mr. A. addressing himself to

* It is observable, that the Anecdote which gave rise to this conversation, was
 recorded in p. 53, First Letter, thus: "I could instance a cobbler not far from hence,

“ the person in whose shop it took place) we are a pretty
 “ set of rascals, according to Mr. P. (who was present;)”
 “ for in our sober moments we are polluted with adultery,
 “ and if we should be taken with frenzy, we are embrued
 “ with murder. Now prove to me, Mr. P. that I am an
 “ adulterer.” I never said you were, replied Mr. P. I only
 spoke in general terms. “ I always thought, says Mr. A.
 “ that the generals included the particulars; and that, if
 the whole be adulterers, so must all the parts of which that
 whole is composed.” To this Mr. P. made no reply. “ But,”
 resumed Mr. A. “ what is become of the cobbler, the young
 “ Methodist-preacher, or the cobbler’s wife? I *hear* that the
 “ gentleman from whom you pretend to have received it,
 “ has denied it *in toto*.” Mr. P. was still silent. “ If you,
 “ Mr. P. can produce either the cobbler, or his wife, or the
 “ young Methodist-preacher with whom she kept the noc-
 “ turnal visit; I will forfeit to you five hundred pounds.”*
 Mr. P. was still silent. “ But, (continues Mr. A.) admitting
 “ the truth of the above charge, is it not unjust to criminate
 “ a large respectable body of people for the crimes of a few?
 “ If because Mr. P. begun a bargain for a field of grass *in*
 “ *the church*, and actually sold it on the sabbath-day, what
 “ would you think if I were to palm that action on all the
 “ respectable clergy of Helston or else where? Would you
 “ not think me a villain?” (this question was again repeated)
 —a plain question demands a plain answer? “ Certainly (said
 “ Mr. P.) such conduct would not be right.” “ If then,”
 rejoined Mr. A. “ such conduct would not be right, when I
 “ can do it upon fact, what must yours be, when your defa-
 “ mation is founded upon supposition, or what is ten times
 “ worse? What could induce you to take so much pains
 “ in making enquiries concerning the Methodists? What
 “ could induce you to come ten or twelve miles into Helston
 “ to get anecdotes of the Methodists? You enquired of Mr.
 “ Richard Thomas about the Methodist meeting; particu-
 “ larly about their nocturnal meeting? You also enquired

“ who used to live contented and happy with his wife and little family, till the woman
 “ was seduced by a young Methodist preacher both from his bed and board.” Yet this
 very anecdote, on the truth of which Mr. P. here insists so strenuously, is entirely
 omitted in the “ Anecdotes,” though others of less importance are transplanted there.
 And it is omitted in the second edition of that publication itself in which it first ap-
 peared. Do not these omissions carry with them more than a presumption of its false-
 hood, and of Mr. P.’s consciousness of it? And may not those who read, be allowed to
 doubt of its authenticity, till it is demonstrated by the happy engine of Mawman-Smith.

* It may be shrewdly observed by those who are acquainted with Mr. P. that his
 resisting this temptation was a noble instance of heroic fortitude!

“ of Mr. Pasmore ? ” — Mr. P. “ I did not. ” Mr. A. then said “ I can prove it : and if you persist in propagating such “ falsehoods, I will call upon you in the town-hall, before “ all the gentlemen of Helston, if they be present, to oblige “ you to authenticate your stories. ” *

Mr. A. then observed, “ if any immoral action can be “ proved against any member of our society, we will expel “ him ; and you shall have him back in *yours* again. ” † Mr. Andrew then gave him the outlines of the Methodists creed ; of their doctrines, &c. with which Mr. P. appeared to be totally unacquainted ; though he had been so profuse in his execrations of Methodism, and so ready to brand with enthusiasm, fanaticism, &c. the whole body of its professors. And, notwithstanding all the abuse of his First Letter, and his calling, in the Anecdotes, these doctrines “ the religion “ of enthusiasts, ” he frankly acknowledged that his belief was exactly the same as theirs. And yet, strange as it may seem, this acknowledgment is entirely omitted by him ; and, what is still stranger, after these concessions, he has attempted to infer the vices of individuals from those very principles which he here acknowledged to be exactly the same as his own ! and, if any thing be yet wanting to crown this gentleman with the wreath of straw which he so justly merits, it may be found in this : — “ *The author of these anecdotes might with very little pains make considerable additions to these notices ; they are for the most part such as came to his knowledge by mere chance !* ” — That the above account of the conversation is true, and was delivered in our hearing, we witness before the world with our names, *Richard Andrew — Oliver Matthews — Mary Russell — and Thomas Harry,* — the latter present at part of the above conversation.

At the head of p. 15, stands ‘ KNAVERY, ’ in terrible array.

“ *A Methodist of Camborne, advanced a considerable sum “ on a mortgage to a man of Illogan, formerly a respectable*

* At the time of this conversation, it was generally understood, that Mr. Polwhele had applied to Mr. Pasmore personally ; but, on more minute enquiries it appears, that the application was made, not personally, but through a clergyman of Helston. The application however was fruitless. Mr. Pasmore had too much good sense to become the vehicle of such dirty information as Mr. Polwhele wanted ; and politely answered, that he knew nothing about any such concerns, and desired Mr. P. to apply else where for the information he wanted. It should however be remembered, that it was the application itself, and not the manner in which it was made, that Mr. P. denied. That this application was made, I have the most satisfactory assurance ; having received it verbally from a gentleman of Helston to whom Mr. Pasmore (who is since dead) gave the account. Let Mr. P. contradict it, if he can.

† Alluding, as Mr. A. observed to me, to an immorality of character deducible from the field of grass above mentioned, and not glancing at a general disrespect of the clergy, as insinuated by Mr. Polwhele.

“farmer, but, thro’ misfortune, much reduced. Some few months
 “since, this poor man was taken ill, when, wanting money for
 “immediate relief, he sent his brother to the Methodist to request
 “some farther advance upon the mortgage; but to his great sur-
 “prize was refused. The Methodist said, that he should want
 “his money soon, and expected that the estate should be sold soon
 “to pay off the mortgage. The situation of the sick man was
 “pressing, and his brother expostulated with the Methodist to
 “no purpose: till at last, this self-righteous puritan made a pro-
 “posal that he should part with a croft, which he had contiguous
 “to his other property. The proposal was accepted, and the
 “croft tendered for eleven guineas, which was thought a very
 “low price. The purchaser affected surprize, and offered him
 “three guineas, which the other was obliged to accept. But as
 “he could not conveniently resign the use of the croft, the pro-
 “prietor desired that he might have it at an yearly rent; and
 “which was granted, at the very moderate price of two pounds
 “a year.”

Perhaps I cannot answer this story better, than by insert-
 ing an extract from a letter sent me from Camborne, in an-
 swer to an enquiry which I made in that place. From this
 extract, the world will see how little dependence is to be
 placed upon Mr. Polwhele’s word. It has been, indeed,
 judiciously hinted by Mr. P.’s friend, that his *name*, and si-
 tuation as a magistrate, would be sufficient to substantiate
 every fact. This indeed, may have some weight, but it
 must be chiefly where he is not known. I have only to re-
 quest, that when *Mawnan-Smith* shall do its office, Mr. P.
 will apply to himself, what in such *degrading* situations he
 recommends to others—to tell the *truth*, the *whole truth*, and
nothing but the truth, &c.

Extract of a Letter, &c.

“The farmer of Illogan did mortgage his estate to Mr.
 “Paul Burrel, the person accused in Mr. Polwhele’s Anec-
 “dotes. And this farmer had also taken a plot of ground
 “near the same estate, which was only common ground, for
 “which he was to pay twelve shillings a year high-rent,
 “and to inclose and improve it. But, by being in low cir-
 “cumstances (as is evident from his mortgaging his real
 “premises) he was not able to make that improvement
 “which he should have made. Some time after, he desired
 “Mr. P. B. to advance him more money on the mortgaged
 “estate, to which Mr. B. objected, because he had advanced
 “sufficient already, and that at an uncertainty; and because

“ in some time after it was mortgaged, Mr. B. discovered
 “ that this estate was entailed upon a former will, which
 “ would hinder him from coming upon it for what he
 “ had already advanced. On which the farmer himself, *who*
 “ *was not sick, but present*, proposed the yielding up this
 “ piece of common ground (which he had taken, and could
 “ not improve); and Mr. B. considering his circum-
 “ stances, gave him four guineas for his advantage in the
 “ commons, which cost him nothing, but his trouble of
 “ making application to the lord’s steward; and he had not
 “ expended a single shilling on it in improvement. *Since*
 “ this transaction, the spot has become a desirable one; and
 “ Mr. P. B. has let it for forty shillings per annum, which
 “ left him an yearly income of twenty-eight shillings per
 “ annum. In course of time, the farmer, on a change of cir-
 “ cumstances, paid off Mr. B. and redeemed the estate; on
 “ which Mr. B. being paid his interest, and having a little
 “ advantage on the common ground aforesaid, *gave* the far-
 “ mer about six pounds on settling the account. And this
 “ was transacted about two years before he became con-
 “ nected with the methodists.”

This Letter I received from Mr. Garland of Camborne :
 —and it is evident from it, that both the inclosing and im-
 provement of this croft devolved on Mr. Burrel; and, if so,
 Mr. P. cannot call this affair knavery; much less can he make
 Methodism produce a knave two years before it existed.

Among the different heads under which Mr. Polwhele
 has arranged his Anecdotes, there are two in which he seems
 to be particularly interested—“ *contempt of the regular clergy,*
 “ *and uncleanness.*” The first of these he seems to engage
 in from interest, and the second from choice. Uncleanness,
 however, is apparently Mr. Polwhele’s *forte*, where he revels
 as in his native element; for on this head, and contempt of
 the clergy, more room is taken up than on any four in his
 book besides.—But contempt of the regular clergy coming
 first to hand, requires the first attention.

P. 18, “ *At Breage, a Methodist offended at the vicar’s*
 “ *preaching, abruptly left the church in the midst of the sermon.*”
 This is all you have told us of the affair. You have not told
 us the occasion, nor have you hinted, that others have done
 the same who are not Methodists. Suppose if the abuse
 which he received there were such as would at once both
 “ tire his patience, and mislead his sense;” is the departure
 of a Methodist from the church, a crime of such a nature as

will justify you in gibbeting his name, while a similar piece of conduct in others will not so much as excite your notice? Does not your having recourse to such trivial incidents, demonstrate the unfruitfulness of your subject, or the malignity of your mind? Is it possible that Mr. P. after having roundly asserted, that Methodism “plunges its votaries into “every vice,” when attempting to substantiate that charge by specific proofs, should rank in the catalogue of enormities —“*a Methodist left the church?*” Would it be believed that Mr. P. in writing Anecdotes of “half a million of people, “collected chiefly from the lowest orders of society,” could find in their characters nothing to fill his pages without having recourse to a story which can confer disgrace on none but its relater? It is certainly a tacit acknowledgment of the rectitude of our conduct; and while it attempts to fix a stigma on Methodism, betrays, without designing it, the weakness of that cause which it was designed to promote. —But this Methodist is followed by another, whose conduct it seems, is equally base. P. 19. “*A Methodist having occasion to stand as sponsor for a child at Sithney, went out of the church during the litany; nor thought it worth his while to rejoin the congregation. This I am warranted, I think, in attributing to a contempt of the church; assured as I am, that the man was but following the steps of his own spiritual guide. I allude to the funeral of one of ‘the Lord’s people,’ when the Methodist preacher, though he had walked in procession before the corpse from Helston to the parish-church of Wendron, condescended not to enter the church, but filed off with a few, I believe, of his train: thus unequivocally exhibiting his hostility to our establishment.*” The first of these Anecdotes we have (p. 67, First Letter) in another dress. Both are related with equal confidence; yet differing as essentially from one another as both do from truth. In the First Letter, they are *two* Methodists; here they are dwindled into *one*. *There both* were to be sponsors, here it is only *one*. *There, both* left the church as the clergyman was ascending the pulpit; but the “Anecdotes” say, he left the church during the litany. It is thus your happy genius is able to furnish two anecdotes out of the very same circumstances; both equally as remote from truth, as they are from one another. I am happy, however, that I have an opportunity of unriddling these strange enigmas, which, distorted by Mr. P.’s ignorance or malignity, wears but little of their genuine features.

Mr. Thomas Harry of Helston, went to Sithney church to be sponsor for a child. He took with him his daughter, a little girl about four years old. The child having some occasion to go out of church, and not returning as soon as her father expected, he became uneasy : he waited longer, but to no purpose. The child being a stranger in that place, it was naturally suggested to his mind that it might wander, and lose itself. He accordingly left the church to go in quest of her ; and found her at a considerable distance from the church. This necessarily took up some time ; and he omitted returning, because he would not disturb the congregation. This is the substance of the whole affair, as I received it from Mr. Harry's own mouth. What language can properly depict the person who is capable of distorting and misrepresenting so justifiable an action ?—Poor man !

As to the " funeral, &c." I may observe, that the man was a pauper, and many Methodists attended his corpse, not only out of respect to the man, but to avoid the imputation of neglecting him because he was poor. Among these were Mr. Andrew, and Mr. Harry (before mentioned) who, with others, after having accompanied the man to his grave, found it convenient to return home. How this conduct " unequivocally exhibits hostility to our establishment," can only be discerned by looking through the magnifying spectacles of Mawnan-Smith. Hostility always implies opposition ; but how hostility or opposition can be discovered in their peaceable retirement from the scene, when the above circumstances are considered, can only be established by your oath, which we may humbly conceive, supplies the place of all other proof.

In p. 24, we are carried back through the long vista of thirty years. About this time, you say, a strange affair happened in the parish of St. Martin. The story is too long and too uninteresting to transcribe : it amounts to this :—that something like a battle, or scuffle, took place between the parson and a farmer at the time of sacrament. The farmer, it seems by your own account, " was not a classed Methodist," consequently not a Methodist at all. For if he were *not classed*, he was not a member of the society. And yet, even this man's conduct is brought forward as an instance of our " contempt of the regular clergy !" According to this mode of arguing, it is only for Mr. P. to call himself a Methodist, and then we must be answerable for all the nonsense, absurdities, falsehoods, and contradictions,

which he has foisted upon the world ; and if this be done, the world will have but little need to seek for Anecdotes of Methodism from any other quarter. But, it seems, the farmer “ went that very day to a methodist meeting in mullion, “ and was *afterwards* admitted into the society.” How long it was *afterwards*, we are not told : for all you have said to the contrary, it might have been seven years ; and, for all the authority you have brought to the contrary, it might not have been at all. Or, perhaps, Mr. P. may have mistaken parishes ; and this story, if true, may be the produce of another parish, not twenty miles from either St. Martin’s or Mullion.

What will give some sanction to this suspicion, is, that I have purposely enquired into the affair in the above parish ; but must acknowledge that I cannot prove the story false, for this plain reason—I can find no person who knows any thing about it. And Mr. Foxwell, a respectable farmer who resides there, of whom I enquired, positively declared to me, that he had never heard a word about such an affair in all his life. He also observed, that had the story been true, some of the circumstances would most probably have been known. But admitting the whole story to be true, and that “ *the clergyman had complained of the chancel being crowded, “ and that he had desired the people to withdraw to the body of “ the church ; and that to this request due attention was paid, “ except by one man, a sturdy farmer, who had been for some “ time attached to the meeting-house, though he was not a classed “ Methodist ;*” I say, admitting the truth of all this, what a fine compliment does this story pay to the minister’s peaceableness and humility !—All it seems withdrew, except *one man* ; and yet, rather than the minister would pass by this *one man*, “ one of the parties seized the other, and a desperate struggle ensued.” Was the chancel so crowded by this *one man*, that the minister could not pass by ? If so, how could it have contained that congregation which withdrew ? If not, how could the chancel being crowded, be the occasion of *the desperate struggle* ? And, if it could not, what credit is due to Mr. Polwhele’s account of the affair ? But has Mr. P. so exhausted Methodism, that he is obliged to draw Anecdotes from other sources ? And in addition to this effrontery of conduct, has he the consummate ignorance to tell the world, that the “ man was not a classed Methodist ?”—“ But who can play the hypocrite for ever.” A good memory is not equally necessary to every character ;

but Mr. P. seems to be of that number who particularly needs it; though he does not possess it. Upon the whole, if this story be true, it reflects, with much severity, upon the clergyman of *struggling memory*; if false, its severity must be transferred to Mr. Polwhele; and in either case, whether the story be true or false, it fills up the chasm in the title, and proves to a demonstration—"contempt of the regular clergy."

"AN INTRACTABLE AND REVENGEFUL SPIRIT."

We now return from this thirty years travel, to the elysian prospects of Sithney Green. P. 28, "*Several Methodists lately obtruded themselves on Sithney Green, at the time of the parish feast, and attempted, by their psalmody, to drown the noise of the revellers.*" That this is a fact, I admit; and that I most heartily disapprove of their conduct in going thither, I hesitate not to avow before the world. It was an invasion of the rights of the civil power; and, so far, merits my most decided disapprobation. For if the civil power, in which alone can exist the right of suppressing revels, were remiss in the discharge of its duty, no purity of motive, no sincerity of intention, no religious zeal, can give a scriptural or rational, much less a *legal* sanction, to any to invade it. Much less will either scripture or reason justify any man in doing a wrong action, that good may ensue. But, however much I may disapprove of the principle on which the Methodists in this particular acted; I cannot concur with Mr. P. in the sequel of this affair.

P. 28, 29, "*They were assailed by stones, and put to flight; on which they complained to the magistrates of Helston, against two or three persons, one of whom being judged guilty, was directed to compound the matter, by paying two guineas. The magistrates, however, could not forbear censuring the conduct of the Methodists, in abusing religion by a mistaken zeal. Yet as they left the hall, they discovered what spirit they were of, by execrating the justices, and wishing that Elijah would come down with his fiery chariot, and drive them to bell.*"—From several who were present at the justices meeting on this occasion, I have authority to say, that *no such words were ever spoken there.* The fact is, a man who appeared as an evidence, did say, (and I believe swore) that while on the Green, some of the Methodists prayed that God would send down Elijah, &c. But that such words were ever spoken in the presence of the magistrates, as applying to them, no man alive (except Mr. P.) I believe, will pretend to avow. The Methodists who

were on the Green, positively deny that any such words were spoken there. And the averment of the man on whom the authenticity of this expression rests, will appear in a very suspicious light, when it is known that he has since absconded for a robbery, and a reward is at this moment offered for his apprehension.

“ POLITICAL RESTLESSNESS.”

P. 30, “ *During the late riots in the neighbourhood of Camborne, the mask was thrown off by the Methodists, whose views were obvious and direct—the destruction of subordination, and a share in the plunder of all property.*”—I have enquired into this affair, and the naked truth is, that not one Methodist ever did join the mob from choice; but many were compelled to join through necessity. Among those who were thus compelled, was Mr. Budge of Camborne, a gentleman of high respectability, both as a man and a Christian. He was standing in the shop of his brother, in company with the clergyman, Mr. Vyvian attorney, and Mr. Alexander Paul, all of whom were obliged to go with the mob, together with others, though contrary to inclination. Many others were in the same predicament, and many more hid themselves to avoid a similar fate. But instead of “ a share in the plunder of all property, and the destruction of all subordination;” those of the methodists who had any authority, were a check upon the mob during the day.—For this information I am indebted to Mr. Burrel, Mr. Richards, and Mr. Odgers, the latter of whom was present when Mr. Budge was forced from his brother’s shop; and it was transmitted to me by Mr. Vounder, a neighbour of mine, whom I requested purposely to enquire into the truth of the Camborne tales.—Political restlessness, is succeeded (p. 32) by

“ VAIN GLORY.”

But so numerous are the examples of vain glory too that, like hypocrisy, not a single instance can be adduced of it. “ *Numerous examples of vain glory might (however it seems) be adduced from the Methodists of the last and present ages.*”—Why then, it may be asked, has not Mr. Polwhele done it? If instances be numerous, they might have been adduced with the greater ease. And, if your notices be “ casual,” it is wonderful why chance should be so remiss in her supply; especially as it would have rescued her votary from the suspicion of imposition. But you prove it by argument, thus—“ *humility and charity (says a correspondent) by no means form*

"the general character of these zealots." Thus is the fact demonstrated ;—and it is thus that out of the mouth of two or three witnessess shall every word be established !

"PROPHANENESS" now rises in sight. Under this head are two specific anecdotes ; one in the parish of St. Keverne, and the other in Penzance. I shall begin with St. Keverne. P. 31 "*Some time since, at the meeting-house in St. Keverne, a Methodist preacher introduced into his sermon a dialogue between God and the devil. After a pretty smart conflict, the devil, it seems, gained the mastery ; when God said, take 'em all, devil—take 'em all, devil—take 'em all, devil !*" —I have been in that neighbourhood, and have personally enquired into the affair. Of Mr *William Ellis* of Cadgwith, in the adjoining parish, to whom I was directed for information, I have received the most positive assurance to the contrary. Mr. Ellis, I apprehend, frequents that place ; and is perhaps more conversant with the Methodists there than any other man ; and was therefore the most likely person to give me the best information on the subject. He observed, that never having heard or known any such language in his life, he was fully convinced that the story had no foundation in fact. And that never having heard, in any shape or form, any thing which bore the least resemblance to such account, he doubted not but the whole was a fabrication. Such was the account given by Mr. Ellis of Cadgwith, to Mr. John Lanyon of Helston, and myself. The only question now is —Is this story true, or false ? I have produced my evidence in denial ; but in point of affirmation Mr. P. has brought none. This denial is now before the world ; and if, in opposition to Mr Ellis's relation, Mr. P. can substantiate this anecdote before the world, he has now a fair opportunity of doing it ; and till this be done, my denial is at least tantamount to his assertion. The world is now at liberty to decide on its truth or falsehood ; and if, contrary to the knowledge of Mr. Ellis, Mr. P. can prove it a fact, it is such as will meet with the most decided disapprobation of every Methodist, and expose the author of such expressions to their avowed contempt.

The second anecdote lies, it seems, in Penzance (p. 34,) where "*a fellow preaching on the text, and they all with one consent began to make excuse, took up the context in a very singular manner. The first said, I have bought a piece of ground, I must needs go and see it. That might be, cried the Methodist. Another said, I have bought five yoke of oxen,*

“and I go to prove them. That might be, cried the Methodist.
 “And another said, I have married a wife, and therefore I
 “cannot come.—That is a lie! cried the Methodist; for he might
 “have brought his wife with him.” I have not had an opportunity of enquiring at Penzance into the truth of this solitary anecdote, which relates to that place. Whether the story be true or false, is to me a matter of the most perfect indifference; nor do I feel the least solicitude to have my doubts resolved into certainty. Admitting the truth of all you have related, I see nothing in the expressions but sterling truth, rather vulgarly expressed. Had “*the fellow*” observed, “that in these instances which our Lord has given us, as
 “characteristic of the human heart, we have some deplorable examples of human weakness; and we see how apt
 “the depravity of man is to shelter itself under the most fallacious excuses. In the last instance in particular, we
 “see the awful presumption of risking our eternal concerns on the vague uncertainty of false and inconclusive reasonings.” I presume, had the man delivered himself thus, Mr. P. would not have cited him at his bar. If he would, it is incumbent on him to point out the error; if he would not, it is evident that it is not the thing delivered, but the manner of its delivery, that he objects to; and if so, how can he call that profaneness, which he admits as right, and which only differs from his own sentiments in the modification of its delivery? But to sum up the whole; Mr. Polwhele’s ignorance seems so gross, that he cannot distinguish between the thing delivered, and the manner of its delivery; and yet to call in question any thing which this gentleman advances, is “*contempt of the regular clergy!*”—I now enter upon your grand *forte*—“UNCLEANNESS.”*

Here Mr. Polwhele seems to be perfectly at home. In this happy element, he wantons in the effusions of his own mind, and seems to revel at large in the gratification of his taste. In this arsenal, Mr. P. seems to have a plentiful supply both of materials and weapons for offensive warfare. It is like a moving garrison, which he can dexterously pack up—open again—and erect where and how he pleases. It is to this garrison that I now repair.

P. 37. “*At such an hour (a late one) however, I not only suspect, but am assured, that there are young men and maids disposed to exclaim with Comus,*

* Uncleaness seems much to Mr. P. like the enchanted forest in Comus, to which he has had recourse. The intoxicating draughts which he has taken from the cup of

"Come let us too our rites begin,
 "'Tis only day-light that makes sin;
 "Which these dun shades will ne'er report;
 "Hail, goddess of nocturnal sport,
 "Dark veil'd Cotytto, &c."

Of these facts, it seems Mr. P. is not only suspicious, but *assured*. It may not be improper in this place to ask, from what quarter does his assurance arise? I presume, from the first species of evidence—*sensation*. And, forgetting the place where he obtained this *assurance*, he has mistaken a Methodist meeting for a nocturnal revel of Comus!—P. 38, "*At Mawgan, a short time since, a girl upon her knees praying, was seized by some one, gently I suppose, and a cry was soon heard that he was kissing her.*"—I have enquired into the truth of this story, but not one creature can I find who is able to give me the least information on the subject. All I could get was this:—"Mr. P. if he were present, might have been the man; and it is incumbent on him to prove his assertions." This was all I could get; so that the tale, taken altogether, is hardly entitled to the name of truth revised and corrected by the vicar of Manaccan.—P. 38. "*At St. Agnes, the society stay up the whole night; when girls of twelve or fourteen years of age run about the streets, calling out that they are possessed.*"

The only account that I could obtain of this circumstance was this:—That the society never did stay up but one whole night; and then it rained so excessively, that they could not return. But how this stay can be, by Mr. P. construed into uncleanness, I know not. He seems to have forgotten his title; perhaps he means *malice*.—P. 38, "*An exhorter, not a preacher, of Sithney, being very solicitous to save the soul of his apprentice girl, made a point of taking her in the evenings to the meeting-house, till at length the fruits of the spirit were manifest, by the girl's becoming, &c. About six months since, she made oath that she was with child by the exhorter.*" I have found, on enquiry, that such an event did take place; and nearly as you have related it. There are, however, several circumstances which you have omitted, and many others in which you have not been so accurate as could have been wished.

The man was not a preacher, nor an exhorter, nor ever Circe, seem to have fitted him for such scenes, as are at once visionary and licentious. His genius, like the "tyrants of antiquity," seems "born to no controul;" and he has entirely forgotten that "a want of decency is want of sense." I have not time to transcribe that masterly turn for lasciviousness which runs through these ten pages. I must confine myself chiefly to the Anecdotes; it being my province, at present, to consider whether they be true or false.

prayed in public in all his life. He was, however, a member of the Methodist society ; and was actually sworn father by the girl ; but he has uniformly asserted the falsehood of her oath, and still continues to persist in his declaration. He is also very liable to imposition ; as he is by no means “ born “ to speech,” and, as my informant observed, so full is he of hesitation, if asked a question, that if the girl had sworn *she was murdered* by him, it is a doubtful case whether he would be able to contradict her, though asserting it in his face. The instant that her pregnancy was discovered, and charged upon him, he was expelled the society, though long before she swore him father ; and he has never since been admitted a member. What, in such a case, would Mr. Polwhele have us do more ; It is plain from hence, that Methodism does not lead to such actions ; for no parent disowns its offspring ; and if Methodism produced such actions, such a character would have been rather cherished than expelled.

P. 39, “ *James Stephens is a Methodist preacher of a notoriously bad character ; he is discountenanced, it is true, by “ the more serious Methodists.*” Any remark on him in Cornwall would be entirely useless ; he is, as observed by Mr. P. of a notoriously bad character ; but has had no connexion whatever with the Methodists for upwards of twenty years. Whatever, therefore, may attach to him, has no kind of relation to us. If Mr. P. knew this, and has yet concealed it, what are we to think of his integrity ? And why did he class James Stephens among the Methodists ? If he did not, why did he relate stories, with the circumstances of which he was totally unacquainted ? And whether Mr. P. knew it, or did not know it, it is a fact, that the Methodists have just as much connexion with James Stephens, as they have with Mr. R. Polwhele.—P. 40, “ *The parish of Constantine furnishes us with three Methodist preachers. The first, was “ a young man who went to London to better his trade. At “ his return, he appeared to many as a most consummate coxcomb ; but, in the opinion of his sect, he was a saint and an “ apostle. His career however was but short. He took to ill “ courses, and soon found it necessary to emigrate to America.*”

I have been in the parish of Constantine, on purpose to enquire into the truth of these stories. The first, whose name is W—— P——, was a Methodist previous to his going to London, but was not a preacher. On his return, he resided in that parish for about twelve months ; during which time, as well as prior to his going to London, his life and conduct

were exemplary ; and he was accepted amongst the Methodists. After some time he removed to the parish of Crowan, where he took to ill courses ; and was expelled from the society a considerable time before he emigrated to America. If Mr. P. knew he was expelled from the society, why did he conceal it ? If not, why did he relate a story, of which he was almost totally ignorant ? And whether Mr. P. were ignorant or not, the story, taken either way, exhibits Mr. P. to the world as unworthy of credit or respect.

P. 40, "*The second was a worthless vagrant, whose conversion affording matter of great triumph. His talents soon advanced him to the office of exhorting, at least, if not preaching. But who can play the hypocrite for ever ? It was not long after, that he was brought home by a justice's order, with a second wife, his first and lawful one residing at the same time in Constantine church-town.*"

The name of this man is T—— R——. The triumph among the Methodists was unknown, except such as is common amongst them on the reformation of a fellow creature. He did join the Methodists, and was with them about a month, and no more ; this was before he went abroad. He never preached, nor exhorted, amongst the Methodists in all his life ; but, on the contrary, was always looked upon as a doubtful character. On his return from abroad, he lived with his former wife ; nor did any person in that place suspect that he had married another during his absence. He was, however, never admitted after his return amongst the Methodists, though he had frequently applied for that purpose. Judge then, what their joy must have been (when his second wife was brought home) to think they had refused an impostor ! Any thing, therefore, which can be said of this man, does not attach itself either to the Methodists or their principles. Let Mr. P. prove the contrary, if he be able.

P. 41, "*The third, during an unbounded share of admiration, gave a proof of his frailty with his father's servant, as often as he accompanied the girl to the meeting-house where he preached.*" "*It was there, whilst he was enforcing the doctrine of attraction, I presume, that he drew to himself the wife of a poor carpenter. The carpenter, jealous of his wife, complained to the minister of her conduct, in running after the young Methodist preacher, to the ruin of her family. But, though the preacher was apt to confound the workings of the flesh with the spirit, the poor woman's attraction was conceived to be purely spiritual.*"

This anecdote involves two distinct stories ; which Mr. P. has ignorantly, or designedly, transposed, though in point of time and circumstances, they have no kind of connexion. The person above alluded to, instead of drawing to himself the wife of a poor carpenter, was prevailed upon by this pious woman to attend the Methodist-meeting. Through her persuasion, he attended ; and was (as far as human discernment could penetrate) sincerely and truly religious. After some considerable time, he did preach, and was much respected. It was about this time that her husband, who had an antipathy towards the Methodists, and hesitated not to speak all manner of evil of them, in his fits of intoxication, became the dupe of the insinuations of baseness ; which its votaries perceiving, fomented the flames of his jealousy toward his wife, In these moments of intoxication he would hint his jealousy to his wife ; but when sober, spoke not a word on the subject. At this time, Mrs. — was the only Methodist in the family, who insisted upon going before the minister to attest her innocence ; and it was with difficulty that she could prevail upon her husband to accompany her thither. However, they went ; and so well satisfied were both the minister and Sir Michael Nowell of the truth of her averment, that, when she offered to be sworn to the truth of what she had advanced, they refused her her oath ; saying, that they were fully satisfied of her innocency ; the latter gentleman (a magistrate of great respectability) appealing to his conscience for the truth of his declaration ; and both united in saying, that her husband who was present, ought in justice to be satisfied also. Here the affair ended.

Her son, from whom I had this account, observed, that his father did not complain to the minister ; though Mr. P. says that he did ; that the family was not “ruined” by Methodism, though Mr. P. asserts the contrary. And, he further observed, that had it not been for his mother’s piety, he is well assured their circumstances would not have been as good as they now are. That he thought so at the time of the family disturbance, though not a Methodist himself : and so well satisfied was he with his mother’s conduct, when compared with that of his father, that he could have fought in her behalf ; and he would not have had her turn back for all the world. He concluded with observing, that he could have had no interest in espousing his mother’s cause against his father, one parent being as near to him as another. And sure he is, that the story never gained any credit,

but with the profligate, the licentious, and the prophane.* And the steady perseverance of his mother, he believes, was the chief instrument in *his* afterwards joining the society. It was in their house that I had this account given me, from the joint testimony of Mrs. —, her son, and daughter; in the presence of two respectable neighbours, who had, from their general knowledge of the affair, given me a similar account before we went to this house. Thus far this woman's character repels the darts of Mr. Polwhele's calumny;—let him injure her reputation if he can.

It was about three years after this affair was totally ended, when a report arose that this preacher had contracted an unjustifiable intimacy with his father's servant girl. Whether this report were true or false, was never proved; it was however generally believed; and, in consequence of that belief, the man (for the girl had never been a member) *was publicly read out of the society*, by Mr. William Horner, the then superintendant preacher. Some time after he had been expelled the society, he married this young woman; supported an unblemished character, and in process of time, was readmitted into the society; and at present supports a reputation, which few will attempt to blacken, except Mr. Polwhele. For the truth of these accounts which relate to Constantine, I quote Mr. Henry Row and Mr. Nicholas Row, neighbours; and Mr. Samuel Roberts, and Miss Roberts, son and daughter of Mrs. Roberts, the wife of Mr. Polwhele's ruined carpenter;† all of Constantine church-town.

P. 42. “*About the year 1791, a man who conducted the singing at the meeting-house of Aggewallar in Camborne, seduced, and brought with child, the daughter of the clerk of that parish, though at the same time he had a wife and five or six children. The public was so much incensed against him, that he was obliged to quit the country.*”—I have made enquiries into this affair, and find in it, taken altogether, more truth

* It is observable that this story seems to have gained credit with Mr. Polwhele. Query, &c?

† So far is this family from being ruined, that it is apparently in affluence. A more decent habitation I never wish to enter. I called at their house on purpose to have the account from their own mouths; after having received the same account from the two neighbours previous to this application. If Mr. P. were to converse with any of this family, and estimate their circumstances from their apparent situation, and yet call it a ruined family, he must look at the whole not only with a jaundiced eye, but through a Manaccan microscope. It is somewhat remarkable, that Mr. P. should have introduced these two stories exactly the reverse of what they ought, in point of time. I fear it could arise from no better principle than to blacken first the character of the man, in order to transfer the odium to Mrs. —, and to load her with suspicions which cannot be justified by even a single circumstance.

than in any anecdote besides in all Mr. P.'s collection. Mr. Polwhele, however, ought to have said, that the instant it was discovered, he was publicly read out of our connexion, in the face of the whole congregation, at the meeting-house of *Penpons*, by Mr. Wm. Horner; and many persons went that day on purpose to hear it done. For the truth of this account, I appeal to the whole neighbourhood.

In this legendary collection of monsters, the next in order is the *Probus* wonder. P. 45, "*A female Methodist was at length so ashamed of her brother and sister saints, that breaking off all connexion with the society, she went to her minister and disclosed to him many things which were done of the Methodists in secret, with a view of putting a stop to their indecent mysteries. Among other things she told him, that the preacher, at a late hour of the night, after all but the higher classes had left the room, would order the candle to be put out, and the saints fall down and kneel on their naked knees; when he would go round and thrust his hand under every knee, to feel if it were bare; the woman had acquiesced it seems in these preliminary ceremonies, but was shocked at the preacher's gradual advances towards perfecting the saints in love. The minister, to whom the woman gave this account, entertained not the slightest doubt of its truth. The anecdote was communicated to me by a gentleman who had repeatedly heard the minister relate it.*"

It was on the 13th of June last, if I mistake not, that I had an opportunity of waiting upon Mr. Ferris, minister of that parish. I shewed him this anecdote—he read it; and declared, that no such story had ever come to his ears: that, never having received any such information from "a female methodist," or other person, he had, consequently, never related any such story: and confident he is, that during his residence in that place, no Methodist has ever deserved such aspersion; and that, had any come to him with such a tale, he would have treated the informant and information with equal contempt. It is by Mr. Ferris's permission, that I publish these his sentiments, together with his name, before the world.

The horizon being clear thus far, I will now look back on what happened prior to his days. I is true that such a story had been in circulation in the time of Mr. Secombe, the late minister of that parish. I am sorry that, by the express desire of my informants, I am obliged to conceal their names. The information, however, was as follows:

About thirteen or fourteen years since, such a tale got into circulation, nobody can tell how ; and it was handed about in Probus as the nonsense of the day. The "female Methodist," when this tale came into being, was upwards of sixty years of age. She was never turned out of the society, and she never left it. She never told any such story to the minister, nor to any other person ; nor any thing that bore the most distant resemblance to it. Often times, says my informant, would the poor old woman weep at the recital of the tale, and lament over the baseness of that heart which could give birth to so foul a lie ; and it is probable that the lamentations of the poor old woman kept alive the tale long after it would otherwise have been buried in its own insignificance.—"Never," says a person who lived in Secombe's house as a servant—"never did Mr. Secombe give credit to this foolish report ; and it was not *his* disposition to propagate falsehoods."

What I have related above is upon the *best possible authority*. And, though I am not at liberty to announce to the world the names of those from whom I received the intelligence ; yet I hope the world will credit my assertions, when I say, that the above information was given me in Probus Church-town, in presence of John and Francis Nicholls, of that place, who will attest the truth of all I have related on this buisness.—Before I dismiss this subject, I cannot avoid observing, that there are two maiden ladies, daughters of the late Mr. Secombe, now residing in Probus Church-town, who must be supposed capable of ratifying Mr. Polwhale's account, if it contains any truth. If Mr. P. can obtain either of their signatures to his assertion, either that their father did receive such a story as fact, or ever believed it, or propagated it as such ; we will bear the reproach. But, until he can do this, I hesitate not to say, that this Probus wonder, which would disgrace the genius of a country fortune-teller, is a gross falsehood.—On the whole, one truth is clear—that a lie has been invented ; but by whom, is no concern of mine : it is driven to a narrow corner ; and is a point of etiquette which must be settled between Mr. P. and his informant. Meanwhile I turn to

"FAMILY DISCORD."

P. 46, "*The distresses introduced into families by Methodism, stand so prominent in almost every town in the kingdom, that it would be almost obstrusive to bring instances in proof of a matter which is already known to all. A porter (who*

"lives near a gentleman of Falmouth) was upbraided by me,
 "says the gentleman, for beating his wife. In justification of
 "his conduct, he observed, that she had for some time past be-
 "come a Methodist; that she was frequently from home at a
 "late hour of the night; that his children were neglected, and
 "that the woman had abandoned all her domestic concerns."

In your First Letter to Dr. H. (p. 53) we have nearly the same account, only differently applied; and under the head of "LYING," the reader has seen something of this affair. It was this story of the cobbler and his wife, that Mr. Andrew of Helston offered Mr. P. five hundred pounds to produce.*—But this story of the cobbler seems to be dead, and it would be unmanly to pursue it to its grave: I shall, therefore, trace the affair to Falmouth.

On the 12th of June I was in that place; and, although I went from house to house purposely to make enquiries, not the least shadow of intelligence could I obtain. In the month of July I was there again, and made similar enquiries, with similar success. In consequence of these unsuccessful efforts, I had written that "the cobbler and the porter
 "seemed to be two trusty brothers of the trade: that the
 "story itself looked for all the world like a threadbare lie,
 "dressed up in a new suit of clothes; gone lately to reside
 "near Falmouth, but now on a visit at Manaccan."—That I was not very erroneous in my conjecture, I think the following extract of a letter, which I have just received from Falmouth, will sufficiently evince:

"Sir,

"Falmouth, 25th July, 1800.

"As Mr. Polwhele has been pleased, in his Anecdotes of
 "Methodism, under the head of its introducing a spirit of
 "family discord, to illustrate it with a letter from a respec-
 "table gentleman of Falmouth, of a porter living at this place
 "beating his wife, because she had become a Methodist, and
 "had neglected his family, &c. I beg leave to send you the
 "following account, which is a true statement of the case:—
 "This porter has been married about twenty-three years;

* It is observable, that to this offer he was not only silent; but, though he has now transcribed almost all the circumstances, as appears above, (yet though charged with the falsehood) instead of substantiating his charge, or attempting to rescue his reputation from the imputation of a lie, he has extracted those very circumstances, and given them a different turn. The cobbler is now metamorphosed into a porter and is supposed to reside in Falmouth. But the seduction, the young Methodist preacher, the bed, the board, &c. are all evaporated together. Are not all these circumstances put together, a more than presumptive proof, that the story of the cobbler was a very cobbler story? The cobbler is vanished out of sight, most probably, thro' Mr. Andrew's detecting the forgery; and, if I may be allowed to infer from analogical reasoning, we shall hear of but few of these Anecdotes again.

“and during the whole of this time, has behaved towards
 “his wife in a most brutish manner, frequently beating her
 “very severely; and more than once, has been brought be-
 “fore the magistrates of this town for his ill-treatment of
 “her; so that beating is no new thing to his wife; she
 “had been accustomed to it a long time before she be-
 “came a Methodist; which has not yet been two years.
 “I believe that *the porter* did make a declaration to the gen-
 “tleman similar to that inserted in Mr. P.’s Anecdotes; but
 “it by no means follows that *his* declaration is true. Indeed,
 “the whole of the anecdote, except her being a Methodist,
 “is an absolute falshood. I have known the woman and
 “her husband many years, and can aver, that she has been,
 “and is, a very sober, careful, and most industrious woman;
 “and no charge can, with any degree of truth, be brought
 “against her, for neglect of her family or abandoning any
 “of her domestic concerns. But as my authority for what
 “I have stated, may be questioned by Mr. P. though I could
 “bring forward many respectable persons in this town to
 “authenticate what I have written; I will strengthen it by
 “the testimony of a gentleman equally respectable perhaps
 “as the gentleman alluded to by Mr. P. who likewise has
 “lived near the porter and his wife upwards of three years,
 “which was some time before she was a Methodist; the
 “gentleman I mean is Mr. James Tippet, an eminent attor-
 “ney of this place, and clerk of the justice’s meetings at
 “Mawnan-Smith; he, as well as his family, must know,
 “that what I have written is a plain statement of facts.

“I am, &c. ANTHONY FOX.”

P. 48, another “*instance of this sort occurs in an adjoining
 “parish (Camborne) in the family of a very respectable friend
 “of mine; whose daughter quitted his house, because he would
 “not permit her to join in the nocturnal perigrinations of the saints.
 “I believe, in her absence, she paid a visit to Dr. Hawker,
 “and is now on her return.*” I know not how to reply to
 this better than in the following dialogue, not “between
 “God and the devil,” as before observed, but between Jesus
 Christ and Mr. Polwhele.

Polwhele, (p. 46.) “*I could mention several families,
 “where affection and friendship seem to languish under the
 “gloom of religion.*”

JESUS CHRIST says, (Matthew x. 34.) Think not
 I am come to send peace on earth: I came not to send peace,
 but a sword. And a man’s foes shall be those of his own
 household. Ibid. v. 36.

Polwhele, (p. 48.) "*An instance of this sort occurred in an adjoining parish, in the family of a very respectable friend of mine, whose daughter quitted his house, because he would not permit her to join in the nocturnal perigrinations of the saints.*"

JESUS, (v. 35) I am come to set a man at variance against his father, and the daughter against the mother, and the daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law.

Polwhele (p. 48) "*It is astonishing how far this mad enthusiasm carries its unfortunate votaries !*"

JESUS, (v. 38) He that taketh not up his cross and followeth after me, is not worthy of me.

Polwhele (p. 48) "*Every trace of filial affection and duty appeared to be obliterated from her mind.*"

JESUS, (v. 37) He that loveth father or mother more than me, is not worthy of me : and he that loveth son or daughter more than me, is not worthy of me.

From an avowed infidel, the above are observations which we might have expected to hear against revelation in general ; but from a minister in the Christian church, "'tis strange —'tis passing strange." May the frowns of Olympus, or some nook in Parnassus in which he dreams over the "Prospects of Greece," conceal this novelty from among the natural and artificial curiosities of Cornwall !

But "she has visited Dr. Hawker ;" and what then ? is Dr. Hawker a monster, or a villain, that even to visit him is a crime ? Or does Mr. P. conceive, that Dr. H. is so universally execrated, that every character must be blasted which goes in his company ; if so, it is incumbent on Mr. P. to prove it ; if not, to assign a reason why his name is introduced here.

P. 49, "*The jumpers, I should have observed, are not unknown in Cornwall.*"* If Mr. P. means those who jump from one lie to another, or those who jump from truth to falsehood, I heartily concur with him in opinion ; but that any "*have been seen on the Four-borough Downs, jumping as high as they could to catch Jesus Christ by the toes,*" instead of being true, it is hardly a probable lie. I have enquired into this affair ; but can only get a positive denial of the fact. However, it is possible that some children might

* At the foot of p. 44, Mr. P. says—"It is almost unnecessary to observe, that the kneelers of Cornwall, the crawlers of Wiltshire, and the jumpers of Wales, have all one family likeness ; and to these nightly congregations, whether they kneel, or crawl, or jump, are we indebted for many mothers in Israel." The man who can thus distort the sacred text, to round off a licentious idea, must be admirably qualified "to promote the glory of God, and the edification of his people !"

have jumped upon the downs ; but perhaps it might have been to catch flies, and your expression is surely inserted in mistake !

P. 49. "*At Helston, it seems, a few weeks since, was a most horrid scene of confusion ; whilst some, it is said, were distorted in the strongest manner, and others falling suddenly down, as if seized with an epilepsy. Amidst this uproar, several Methodists were praying over the poor wretches, and stroking them down, crying, " In God, out devil."*—Will Mr. P. be so good as to produce a single evidence that ever such words were spoken there as he has pretended ? I am credibly informed to the contrary, by several who were present ; and that such words were spoken, it is incumbent on Mr. P. to prove. When that proof is adduced, I may have something more to say on this affair ; and till then, I hope I may be excused from giving assent to a tale which is as improbable in itself, as it is destitute of evidence from every other quarter.

I now turn to the top stone of you magic lantern—

"INSANITY."

P. 52, "*A poor man of Feock was so terrified by the Methodist denouncers of damnation, whom he had been in the habit of attending, that he absolutely lost his senses, and never after recovered them. Unfortunately, no precaution was taken against his mad freaks, till he had actually stoned a child to death in the house where he lodged. The man was committed by the magistrates of Truro, and tried for murder at the Launceston assizes ; but the judge recommended him, as insane, to the care of the magistrates.*" Thus far the text of Mr. P.'s work goes. But, at the feet of five pages is a long note, which gives a more circumstantial account of this unhappy affair. I will however give the most prominent features in this note ; they are as follow : *That it was not his own child, but the man's in whose house he lodged ; that the man who was mad thought, by killing this child, he should send it to heaven ; that his name is Retullack, is a tinner, did always behave sober, had lodged with Mr. Bate for many years : had occasionally gone to hear the Methodists formerly, and had regularly attended them about three weeks before this happened : that his temper appeared gloomy ; and, on the night of the child's death, he got from his bed quite naked, and called on the people of the house to pray with him : that he wounded Bate with a stone ; and, while Bate went for assistance, Retullack wounded two boys ; and when Bate returned, found him with the child in*

his hands; with its skull broken in several places: that Retullack would throw off his tinner's dress, and say he would go up the country a preaching. Bate is clearly of opinion that all this arose from his attending the Methodists. That he said he wanted to wash his hands in innocent blood; had now done it; had sent the child to heaven, and should soon follow it himself. The father also says, that Retullack has long since recovered his senses, and is perfectly steady and composed; but does not go near the Methodists. Bate (the note says) appears to be a grave serious man, by no means of a warm temper, nor at all violent against those whom he thinks the remote authors of the death of his child.

I will now leave this note for a season, and return to the anecdote itself. The strange and contradictory accounts which we have of this unhappy affair, shew that, though it has passed through your alembic twice, it does not seem to be yet arrived at maturity. In your First Letter, you say, "very lately in this part of Cornwall, a poor man having heard a Methodist preacher on the text 'I will wash my hands in innocency,' went home, and seized his infant child, then asleep in its cradle, and murdered it; and washed his hands in the innocent's blood."—Thus far goes the First Letter; but, in the Anecdotes, almost all these circumstances are either omitted or contradicted. There is no account that ever he heard such a text preached from, nor that any person did ever preach from that text. There is no account of the cradle, nor that the child was sleeping in it. That it was *his own* child, is flatly contradicted in the Anecdotes; and the omissions above carry with them all the appearances of falsehood, which circumstantial evidences can give.—On this stage of the case, one very obvious question will arise: If the first edition of this story be falsified by Mr. Polwhele himself, what reason have we to believe the second account, given in the Anecdotes? the first came forth with an intention of being believed, and the second can do no more. And if this second account falsifies the first, have we not equal reason to believe that the third account will falsify the second? That it carries in itself one flat contradiction, I have already hinted. Mr. P. says, (p. 52) "*the man absolutely lost his senses, and never after recovered them.*" But his note, (p. 56) says, "*that Retullack has long since recovered his senses, and is perfectly steady and composed.*" Query, is Retullack restored to his senses or not? If he be, p. 52 is false; if not, p. 56 is false: and in either case Mr. Polwhele commits himself.

That Retallack never was a Methodist, is a position which no one will, I believe, attempt to controvert; and then, whether the Letter or the Anecdotes be true, or false, is a point on which the world must decide. But whether either be true or false, the unhappy affair has just as much connexion with Methodism, as the Isthmus of Darien has with the boundaries of the Tartars, or the Straits of Magellan with the mouth of the Ganges.

As to the note (the outlines of which I have just given) I have seen and conversed with Mr. Bate, the child's father, on the subject of its death; and, in my own house, have read to him the whole note, which is said to have been taken from Mr. Bate's own mouth. On hearing the note read, without being asked a single question, he observed, "It is all exactly as I told it, except my being clearly of opinion that all this arose from his attending the Methodist. I am not clearly of that opinion; I have nothing to justify such an opinion before the world."—How then can Mr. P. so roundly assert that his insanity arose from his being "*terrified by the methodistic denouncers of damnation?*" That he did murder the child after attending the meeting, is a fact. And it is also equally true, that it was done after his *sleeping*, and *working* and *speaking*; and it no more necessarily follows that the murder arose from the meeting-house, than from his *labour*, his *sleep*, or his *speech*. Mr. Bate also observed to me, that the surgeon who attended, gave it as his opinion, that his disorder was a fever in the brain.

Finally, (p. 46) if "*the distresses introduced into families by Methodism, stand so prominent in almost every town in the kingdom, that it would be almost obtrusive to bring instances in proof of a matter which is already known to all;*" Mr. Polwhele had no occasion to write. The conduct of the Methodists is now before the world, and their actions are within the reach of popular observation. If the Methodists be such as Mr. P. has represented them, the world must know it without his publication; but if they be not, his publication cannot make that true, which is false in fact: and, in either case, the book itself is an imposition upon mankind.

I have now gone through the facts themselves; and have given a specific answer to every anecdote which is worthy of notice. Out of about thirty-four anecdotes, eight are false; of six I can get no account, nine are misrepresented, five are related with the omission of many material circum-

stances; and all the remainder, are revised and corrected, while "HYPOCRISY" and "VAIN GLORY" are barren trees. Perhaps I cannot conclude better, than by adopting Mr. P.'s own words (p. 31) and saying, that "such facts are likely to have more weight, than all the reasoning in the world."

That you, Sir, may more maturely consider your evidences, and the mere illusions by which you have been imposed upon, is my earnest desire; and that, from a review of the whole, you may be convinced of your error, and act accordingly, is my sincerest wish. Under the influence of these impressions, I take my leave of the Anecdotes and their Author together.

S. DREW

The haste in which this pamphlet has been printed, has caused several typographical errors to pass in it uncorrected, which it is hoped the candid reader will have the goodness to excuse.

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